Rurouni Kenshin™

SHONEN JUMP MANGA

Story & Art by

Nobuhiro Watsuki

volume 26

和月伸宏

NOBUHIRO WATSUKI

THE END OF THE CENTURY

THE FIRST JAPANESE EDITION OF THIS VOLUME WILL BE RELEASED IN JULY 1999. YES, IT IS THE TIME OF THE GREAT PROPHECY! NOW IS THE TIME!!

WATSUKI ABSOLUTELY DOES NOT BELIEVE IN IT, BUT IF IT HAPPENS, I WILL BE HAPPY TO BE THE LAST OF HUMANITY ALIVE. AND IF IT DOESN'T HAPPEN, I WILL BE LOOKING SO VERY FORWARD TO THE EXCUSES THE CHARLATANS AND EXPERTS MAKE UP TO COVER THEMSELVES.

ALTHOUGH IT IS THE END OF THE CENTURY, IT IS JUST ANOTHER DATE. RUN RIGHT THROUGH IT WITH VIGOR AND ELEGANCE!

Rurouni Kenshin, which has found fans not only in Japan but around the world, first made its appearance in 1992, as an original short story in ***Weekly Shonen Jump Special***. Later rewritten and published as a regular, continuing ***Jump*** series in 1994, ***Rurouni Kenshin*** ended serialization in 1999 but continued in popularity, as evidenced by the 2000 publication of ***Yahiko no Sakabatô*** ("Yahiko's Reversed-Edge Sword") in ***Weekly Shonen Jump***. His most current work, ***Buso Renkin*** ("Armored Alchemist"), began publication in June 2003, also in ***Jump***.

RUROUNI KENSHIN
VOL. 26: A MAN'S BACK
The SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition

STORY AND ART BY
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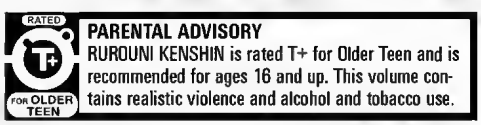

SHONEN JUMP MANGA

Rurouni Kenshin™

STORY & ART BY
NOBUHIRO WATSUKI

MEIJI SWORDSMAN ROMANTIC STORY

Vol. 26: A MAN'S BACK

Once he was *hitokiri*, an assassin, called Battōsai. His name was legend among the pro-Imperialist or "patriot" warriors who launched the Meiji Era. Now, Himura Kenshin is *rurouni*, a wanderer, and carries a reversed-edge *sakabatō* blade, vowing to never kill another soul.

呉黒星

Woo Heishin

不動沢

Fudōsawa

THUSFAR

Those with grudges against Battōsai have gathered to take their revenge. To make matters worse, Kenshin finds out that the mastermind of this new attack is Enishi, the brother of Kenshin's deceased wife Tomoe—who died at Kenshin's own hand. And yet Kenshin decides to fight in order to protect the present and begins by telling his friends of his past.

Enishi and his crew appear midair above Kamiya Dojo in hot air balloons. In the midst of the battle that follows, Enishi murders Kaoru. Overwhelmed by the guilt of not saving Kaoru, Kenshin exiles himself to the "Fallen Village." However, the others discover that Kaoru's body is actually one of the "corpse dolls" created by Gein. Aoshi, while searching for Kaoru's whereabouts, defeats Gein and joins Saitō on the way to Enishi's organization's new hideout. In the meantime, the crazed Kujiranami escapes from jail. Tsubame, worried about Yahiko fighting Kujiranami along with the police, runs to Kenshin in the Fallen Village. Kenshin, who did not react to the call for revenge, finally responds when the girl pleads for help. Kenshin's revived sword saves Yahiko and returns Kujiranami to sanity. Kujiranami desires a warrior's death, but he accepts Kenshin's appeal to "live in the new era" and remands himself to justice. Meanwhile, Sanosuke is in a travelers' town in Shiushū, unaware of Kenshin's return.

CAST

明神弥彦

Myōjin Yahiko

相楽左之助

Sagara Sanosuke

神谷薫

Kamiya Kaoru

高荷恵

Takani Megumi

緋村剣心（人斬り抜刀斎）

Himura Kenshin
(Hitokiri Battōsai)

雪代縁

Yukishiro Enishi

巻町操

Makimachi Misao

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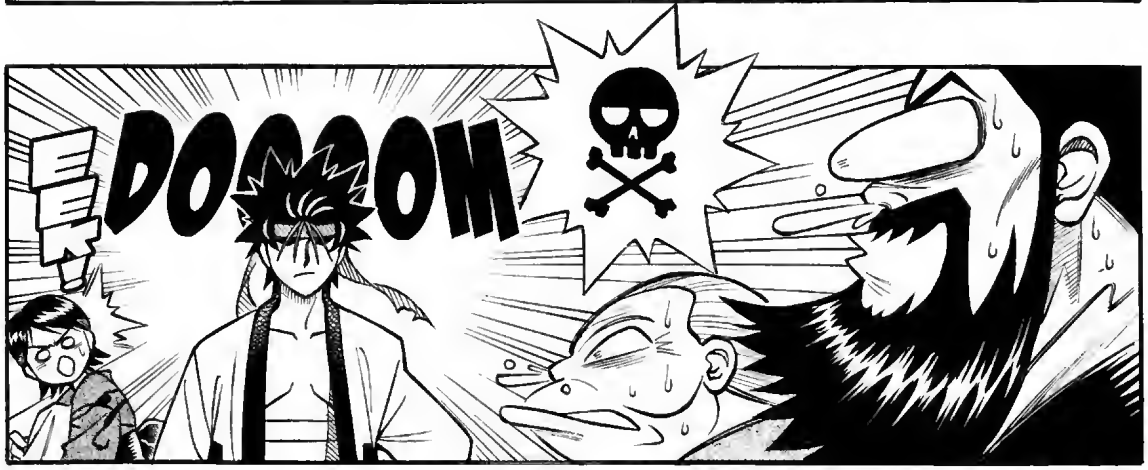
A Man's Back 1: Fight Merchant Reestab-lished

WHO ARE YOU?!
Do
Oo
M
WHY DOES THAT MATTER, YOU YAKUZA HICK?
ARE WE GOING TO FIGHT, OR NOT?!
TMP

I DON'T CARE WHY...I JUST NEED A LITTLE ACTION TO RELIEVE SOME STRESS...
LATELY, I'VE BEEN CONSTANTLY IRRITATED...
YOU'RE NOT FROM AROUND HERE IF YOU DARE TO BARK AT ME.
WAIT.
Y...YOU!
SHIK
GRIN
THIS SEEMS LIKE A GOOD CHANCE TO...
...TEST MY NEW FOREIGN BODY-GUARDS.
SHA
やのさあ
飯処
飯
飯
HEY, IT'S SHOW TIME!

WHAT, TIME FOR US TO WORK ALREADY? WON'T THAT TARNISH THE NAME OF OGRE-BANE FUDŌSAWA?
NAH. IT JUST MEANS HE'S NOT WORTH MY TIME.
QUIT COMPLAIN-ING AND SHOW US WHAT YOU GOT.
WHOA...
HE'S HUGE!
YAMMER YAMMER
KROM
SHUP
TROM

WHICH OF YOU IDIOTS WANTS TO BECOME RUST ON MY SWO—
FWIK
LET'S SEE.

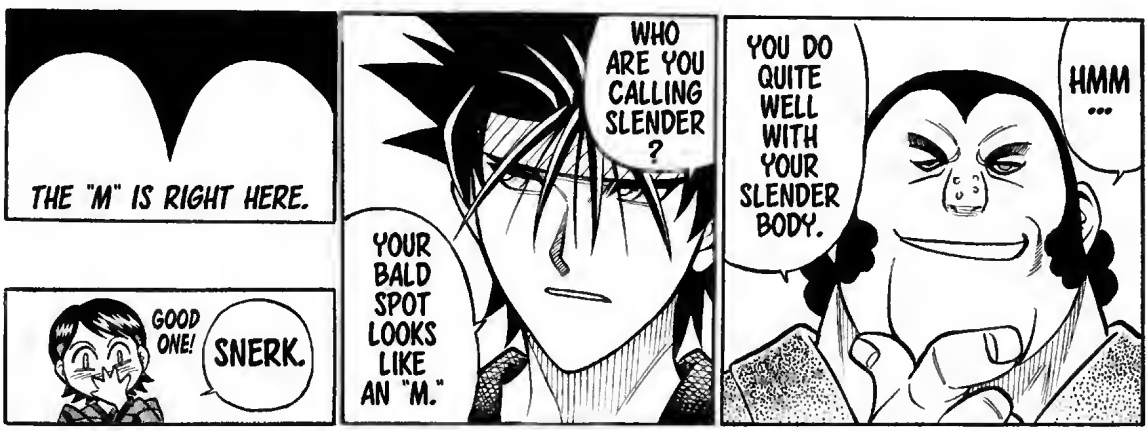

DOOOOM

WHO THE HECK ARE YOU?
?
?
ZA-ZA-ZANZA?!
WE JOINED FORCES TO FIGHT BATTOSAI...
OH.
REFER TO VOLUMES 1 AND 2.
WAIT A MINUTE. YOU FORGOT ABOUT US?!
悪
NOT BAD. IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE FOUND YOUR PLACE.
HEH
YOU'VE BEEN DRIVEN OUT OF TOKYO, AND NOW YOU SERVE AS BODYGUARDS FOR A HICK YAKUZA.
WH-WHAT WILL WE DO, BROTHER?
ERGG...
WHAT?!
IT WAS HALF A YEAR AGO!
RIGHT, I KINDA REMEMBER YOU TWO. FROM FOUR AND A HALF YEARS AGO.
FOUR AND A HALF?

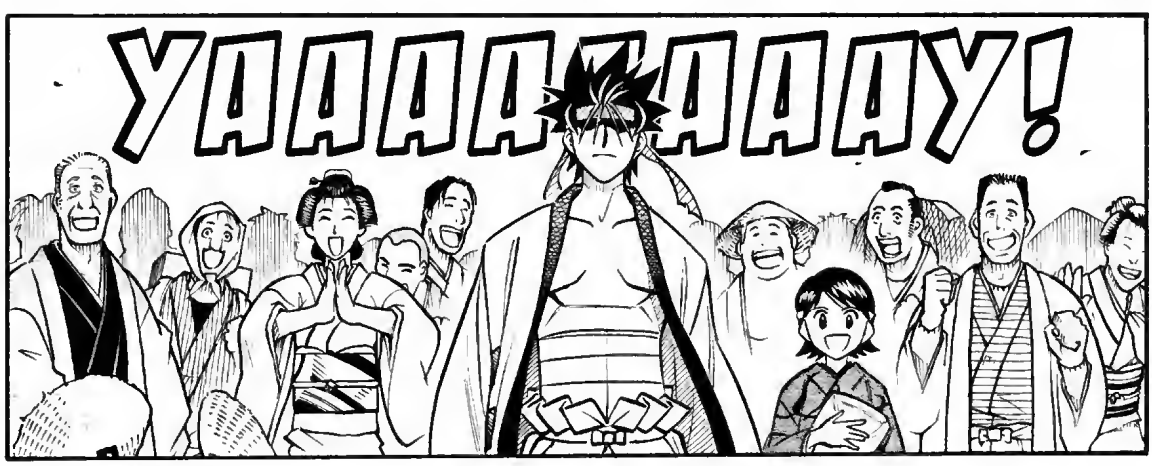
I SEE.
IF HE DOESN'T HAVE HIS ZANBATŌ ...!!
!
HA HA!
CALM DOWN. WE HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
LOOK AT HIM CLOSELY!
I'LL GET MY REVENGE FOR THE WOUND ON MY NOSE, RIGHT NOW!!!
HERE WE COME, ZANZA !!
AAA
!
FWUMP
RIP
KRAK
RIP
KTHUNK
CRUNCH
THUNK
RIP
BAM

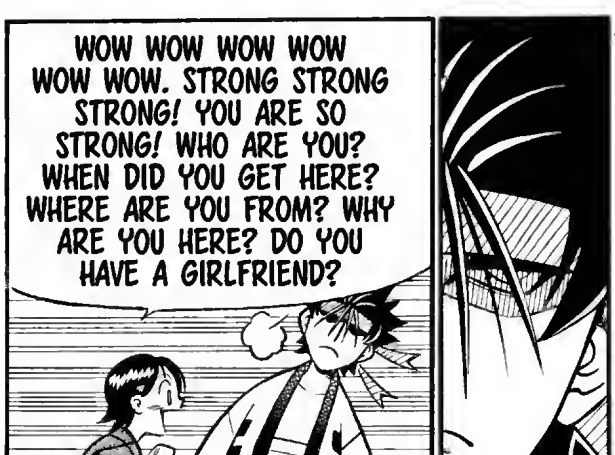
WHAT SHOULD I COOK FOR DINNER TODAY? WE'RE POOR, SO IT'S TOUGH TO KEEP COSTS LOW!! (CONFUSION AND ESCAPE FROM REALITY)
OH NO! ANOTHER FIGHT OVER ME! (MISUNDER-STANDING) JUST BECAUSE I AM SO PRETTY! (CONCEIT)
PEEK
—THESE THOUGHTS OCCUR OVER APPROXIMATELY ONE SECOND.

DON'T WASTE MY TIME WITH GARBAGE LIKE THIS.
SHEESH.
!
THWAK
HOW CRUEL.
EVEN OUR MOMENT OF DEFEAT HAS BEEN OMITTED ...
DOOM

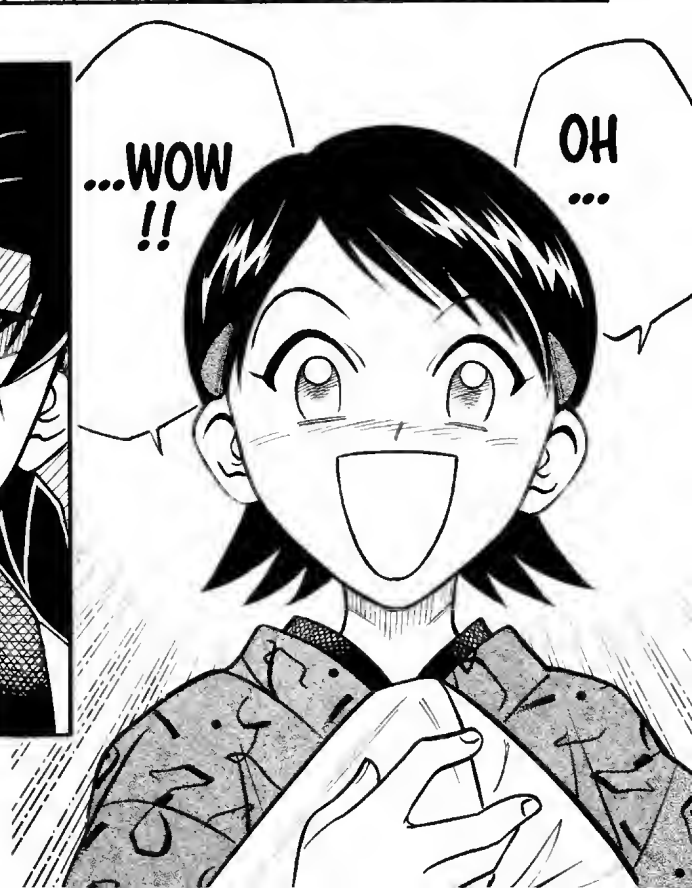

THE "M" IS RIGHT HERE.
GOOD ONE!
SNERK.
YOUR BALD SPOT LOOKS LIKE AN "M."
WHO ARE YOU CALLING SLENDER?
YOU DO QUITE WELL WITH YOUR SLENDER BODY.
HMM ...

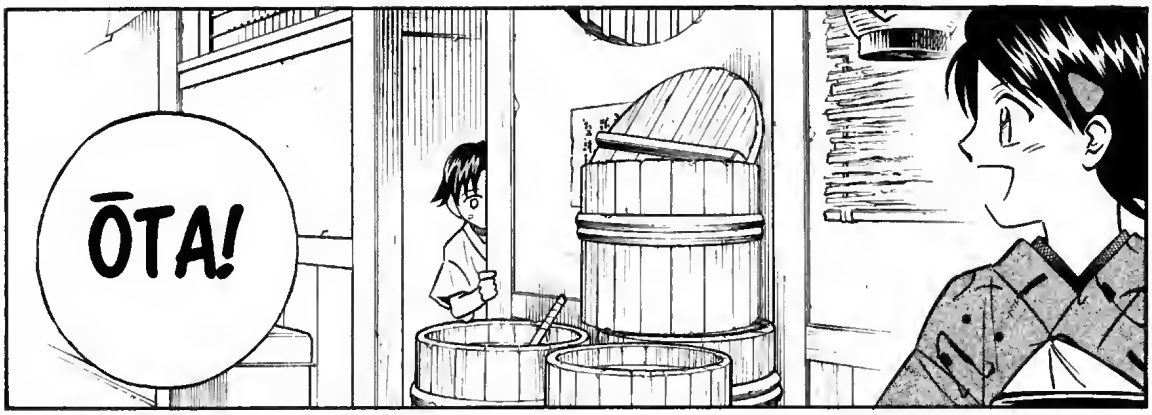
LET'S MEET AGAIN, IN A DIFFERENT SETTING.
FUDŌSAWA-SAN?
TP
HAH...I LIKE YOU, YOUNG MAN.


YAAAAAAAY!


WOW WOW WOW WOW WOW WOW. STRONG STRONG STRONG! YOU ARE SO STRONG! WHO ARE YOU? WHEN DID YOU GET HERE? WHERE ARE YOU FROM? WHY ARE YOU HERE? DO YOU HAVE A GIRLFRIEND?

SISTER...


...WOW !!
OH ...


ŌTA!

OH, I HAVEN'T MADE ANY INTRODUCTIONS. THIS IS MY BROTHER ŌTA AND I'M U—
...
EVERYTHING IS FINE NOW, SO YOU CAN COME OUT.
IS THAT WHERE YOU WERE HIDING?
...
UH-HUH

THWUNK
!!

OF COURSE HE WAS HIDING! ŌTA IS STILL LITTLE! I TOLD HIM TO HIDE WHENEVER THERE'S TROUBLE!!
WHY WERE YOU PLAYING HIDE-AND-SEEK WHEN YOUR SISTER WAS IN DANGER?
GRR
WH-WH-WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING!!

A MAN SHOULD ALWAYS RAISE HIS FIST.
IT'S BETTER TO RUN AWAY THAN HIDE BEHIND SOMETHING. AT LEAST IF YOU RUN, YOU'RE SHOWING YOURSELF TO THE ENEMY.
...

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT'S GOING ON HERE.
SHUU
THERE ARE NO SIDES.

YOU HELP US, THEN YOU HURT US!
WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON, ANYWAY?

I JUST WANTED TO RELIEVE SOME STRESS.

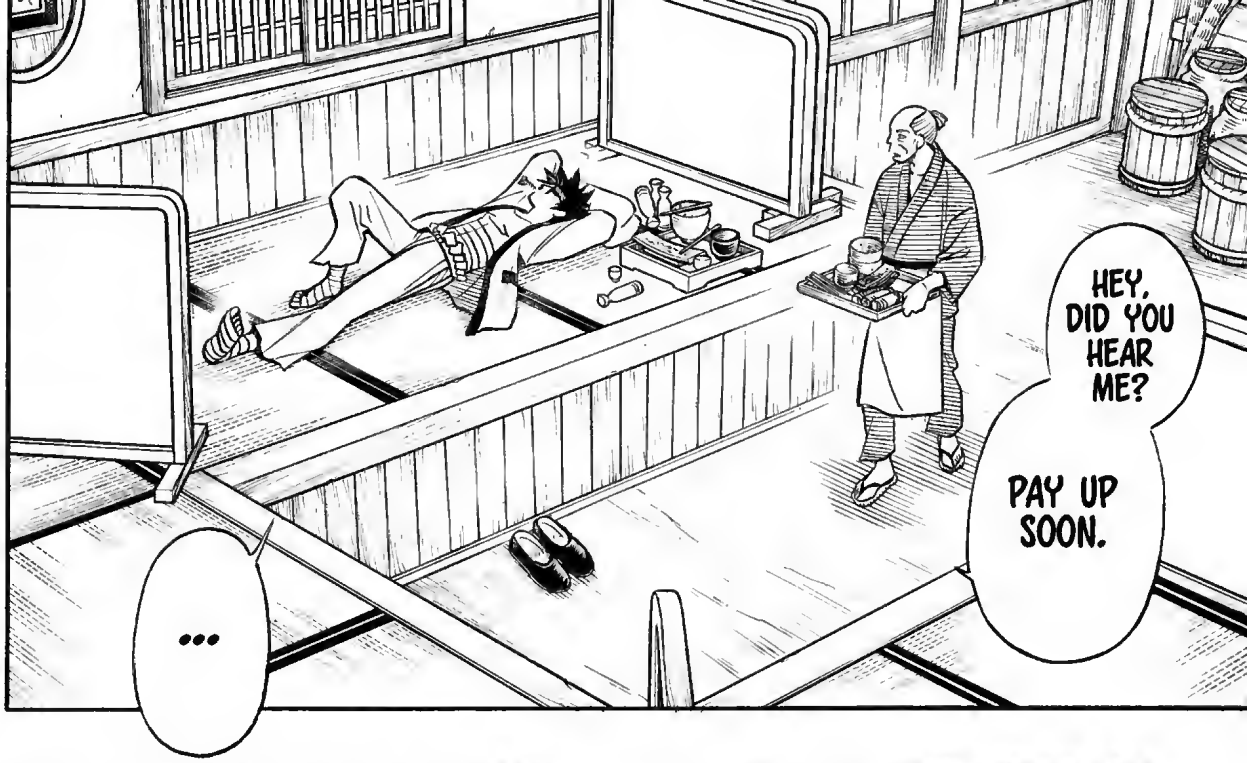
IT MIGHT BE HARD WITH HALF A FOREHEAD, BUT TRY TO KEEP YOUR MISUNDERSTANDING TO A MINIMUM, FORE-HALF.
SEE YA.
SLAM

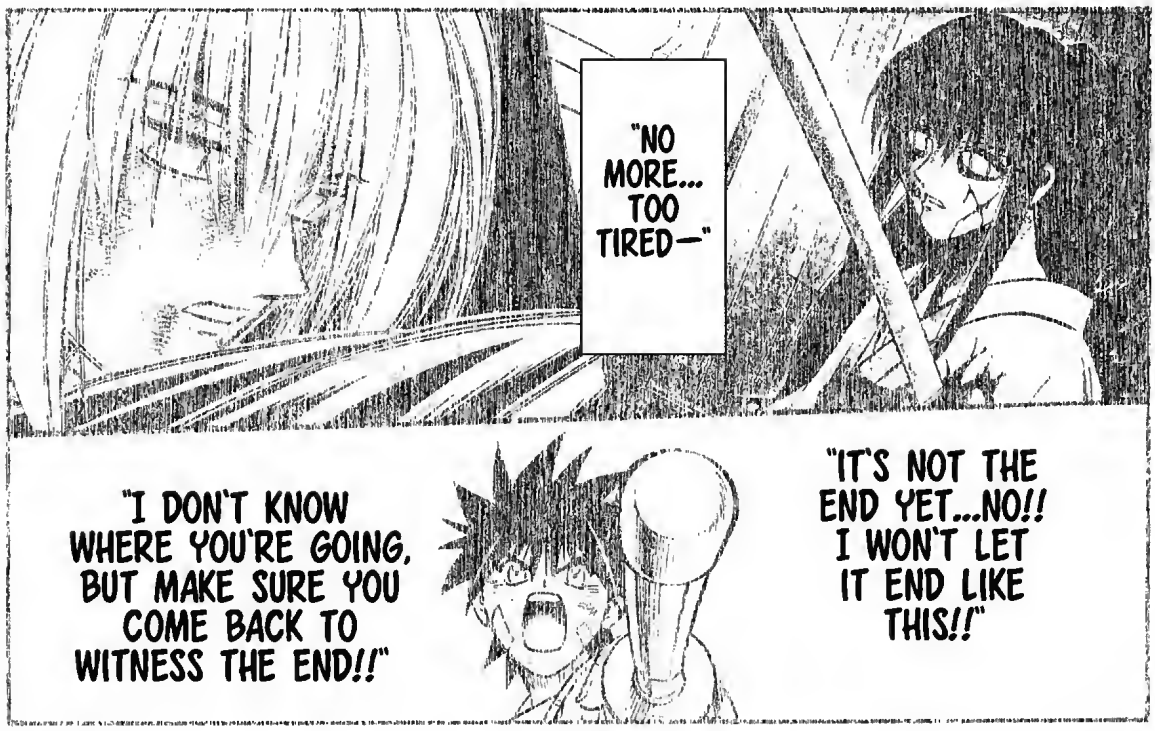
*The half is right here.
THIS WILL BE SOME TROUBLE...
ON TOP OF FUDŌSAWA...
...AND HIGASHI-DANI...
YAMMER
YAMMER
YAMMER
TRULY A FORE-HALF...
...
SHE DOES HAVE HALF A FORE-HEAD...
YAMMER
...ANOTHER WEIRD ONE HAS ARRIVED...
YAMMER
YAMMER
FORE-HALF...

KYA!
AND STOP IT WITH THE FORE-HALF!
SHUT UP!
HE'S NOTHING LIKE MY FATHER!

LET'S GO HOME, ŌTA!

SIR, WE'RE CLOSING NOW.


HEY, DID YOU HEAR ME?
PAY UP SOON.
...


"NO MORE... TOO TIRED—"
"I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING, BUT MAKE SURE YOU COME BACK TO WITNESS THE END!!"
"IT'S NOT THE END YET...NO!! I WON'T LET IT END LIKE THIS!!"

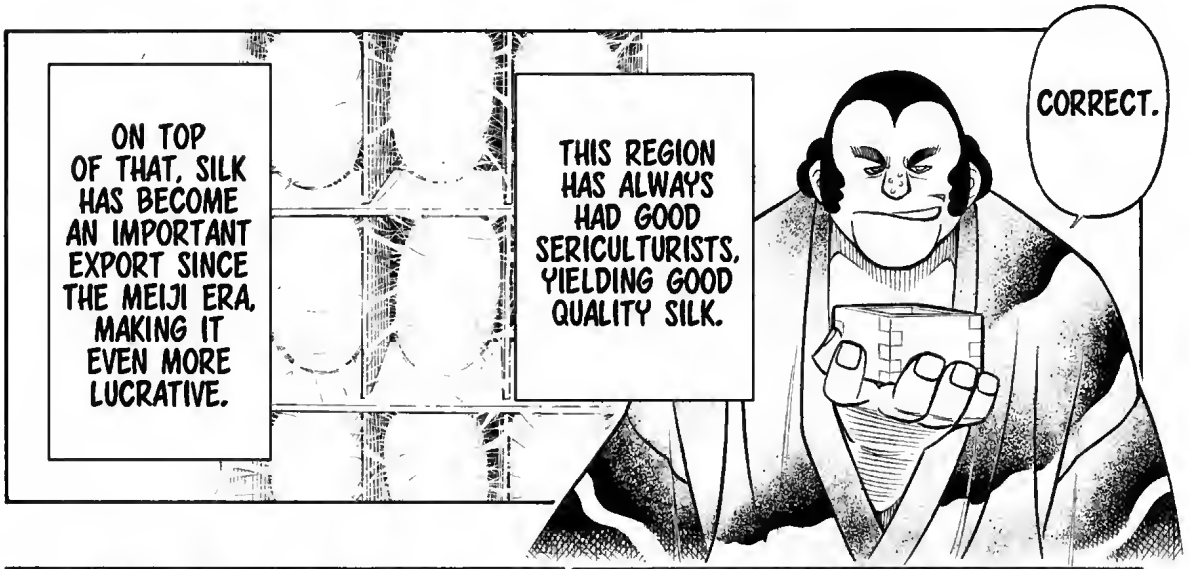
...TO WITNESS...
THERE'S NOTHING...

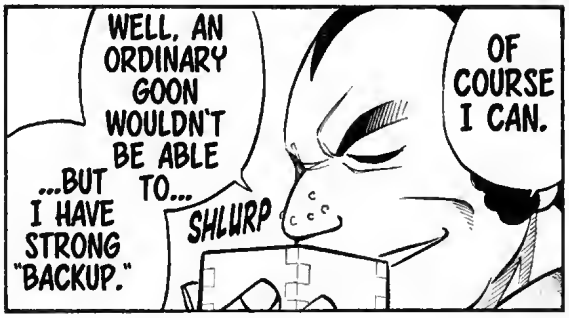
!
SHUUP...
SIR, THE BILL!
MASTER, PUT HIS BILL ON MY TAB.

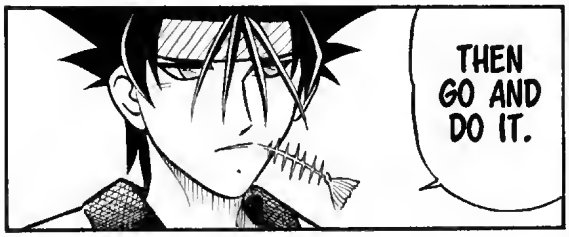
I DIDN'T REALIZE YOU WOULD STILL BE DRINKING IN THE SAME PLACE. YOU'RE QUITE A DRINKER.
YOU MADE ME SEARCH FOR YOU, YOUNG MAN.
HMM?
YO.
MMM
UMM...
IF YOU'RE HERE TO PICK UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF, YOU'RE VERY WELCOME TO.
AH, BALDY M.
FWIP

I SAID "I LIKE YOU."
SANOSUKE-SAN...
NO, NO.
DID YOU COME HERE FOR THE HOT SPRINGS? OR FOR HIKING?
NO WONDER YOU ARE SO STRONG.
I HEARD FROM HIRUMA. YOU WERE A WELL-KNOWN FIGHT MERCHANT IN TOKYO, CORRECT?
AND I'M AS GOOD AS DISOWNED, SO I HAVE NO HOME TO GO BACK TO.
OF COURSE, WHEN I LIVED HERE, THE TOWN WASN'T AS DEVELOPED, SO I DON'T FEEL ANY SENSE OF CONNECTION.
...NEITHER.
I JUST WENT WHERE MY LEGS TOOK ME, AND I ENDED UP WHERE I LIVED A LONG TIME AGO.
HEH
IT DOESN'T MATTER.
SO, WHAT DO YOU WANT, IF NOT REVENGE?

EVEN BABIES HERE KNOW THAT.
SILK.
THEN YOU KNOW WHAT MAKES THE MOST MONEY HERE.
AH, SO YOU ARE FROM THIS REGION.


ON TOP OF THAT, SILK HAS BECOME AN IMPORTANT EXPORT SINCE THE MEIJI ERA, MAKING IT EVEN MORE LUCRATIVE.
THIS REGION HAS ALWAYS HAD GOOD SERICULTURISTS, YIELDING GOOD QUALITY SILK.
CORRECT.


WELL, AN ORDINARY GOON WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO...
...BUT I HAVE STRONG "BACKUP."
SHLURP
OF COURSE I CAN.


THEN GO AND DO IT.

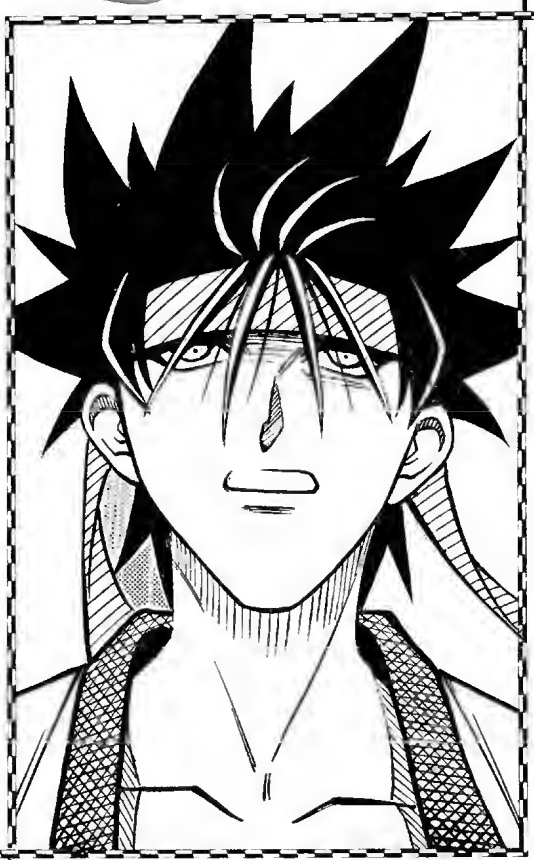
...A HUGE HURDLE APPEARED.
BUT THEN, WHEN I DECIDED TO MAKE A MOVE...

SO I'VE DECIDED TO TAKE THIS TOWN, WHERE ALL THE SILK IN THE REGION ENDS UP.
ANYONE WHO HOLDS TERRITORY IN THE REGION WOULD BE STUPID TO PASS UP THIS OPPORTUNITY.
YOU CAN "TAKE" THIS TOWN?
惡

THAT GIRL'S FATHER, FROM THIS AFTER-NOON...
HE IS SO STUBBORN AND VIOLENT, WE CAN'T HANDLE HIM—
NO HE DID NOT!
DAD!
HE GOT YOU ON THAT ONE, UKI.
FORE-HALF?
THAT WAS SO FRUSTRAT-ING!
I WAS GOING TO ASK THESE TWO, BUT I CAN'T EXPECT MUCH, BASED ON THEIR WORK THIS AFTER-NOON.
...
YOU GUYS ARE STILL HERE?
OF COURSE, IF I TAKE CARE OF IT, IT WOULD BE A CINCH...
...BUT I DON'T WANT TO BECOME AN OUTLAW.
SO HERE'S THE DEAL—
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE ON THIS FIGHT FOR US?
...

WELL... THAT WILL BE SUITABLE FOR MY STRESS RELIEF.
HEH
HE'S ALREADY BEATEN UP ABOUT 50 OF OUR YOUNG MEN.
TSK
I DON'T WANT A LETDOWN LIKE THIS AFTERNOON.
IS THAT OLD MAN ANY GOOD?
...BACK IN BUSINESS!
FIGHT MERCHANT ...
悪
HUH?
THAT MAN SOUNDS INTERESTING.
...I'D LIKE TO MEET HIM.
IF THERE IS A CHANCE...

Rurouni Kenshin



Act 229

A Man's Back 2: Two Alike

和月伸宏

YAWN
ALL I WANT IS AN ENTER-TAINING FIGHT.

KRII
KRII

I KNOW! IF WE FINISH HIM WITH THIS ONE SHOT, THERE WILL BE NO NEED FOR ZANZA...
...WHICH WILL TURN OUR SITUATION AROUND!!
KRII
AIM CAREFULLY, BROTHER.
WE'RE JUST ERRAND BOYS IN THIS.

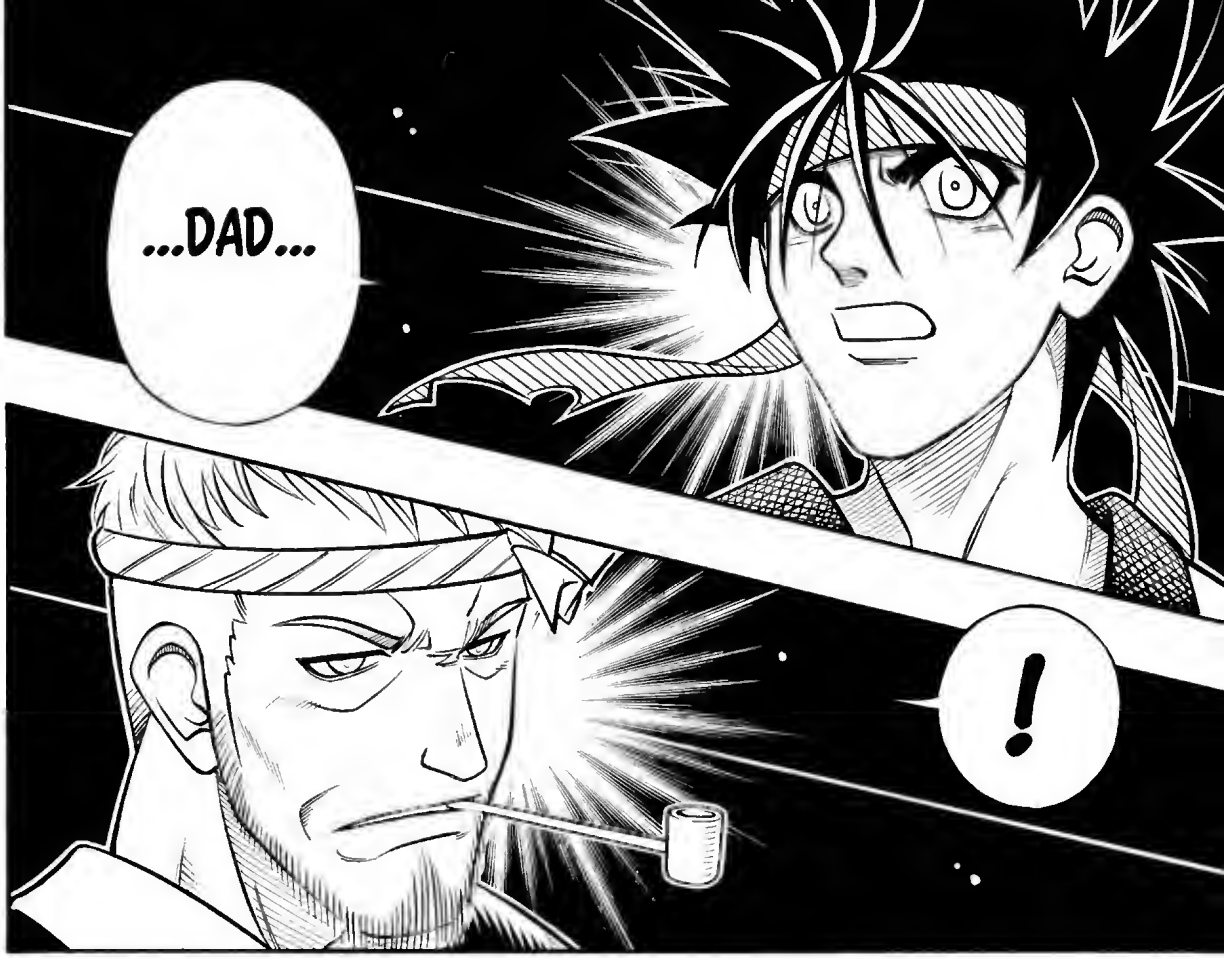
FWISHHH
AK

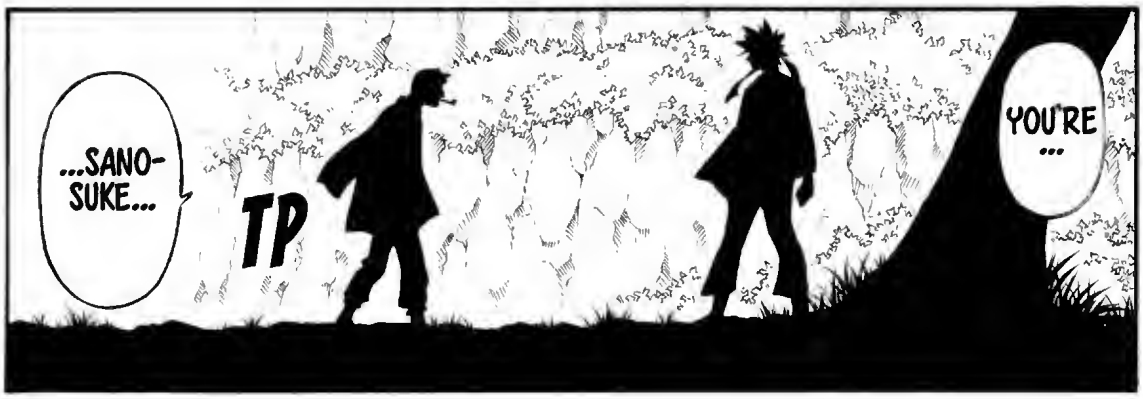
...
WHAT'S THIS? A LETTER?
SNEAKING
?!!
WHAT IS HE?!
JAB
FUDŌSAWA'S MEN, AGAIN?
FWING
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? DAD!
HRM ?
NOTHING.
I challenge you to a duel. I will await you at the single tree of Higashidani. -Zanza
SKCH SKCH
UKI, I'M GOING OUT FOR A BIT.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THE DEADLINE FOR THESE HATS IS TOMORROW, SO IF WE DON'T HURRY, WE WON'T MAKE IT!
I'LL BE BACK BY NOON.
DA-A-AD !!

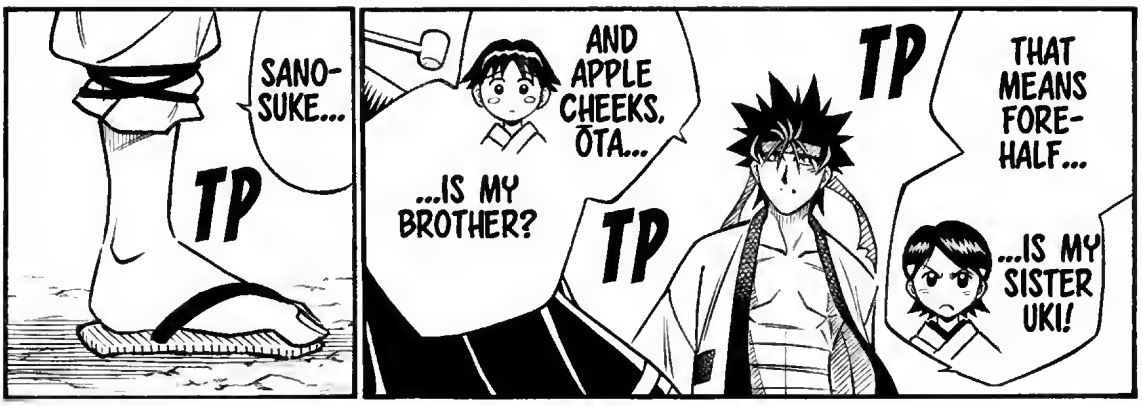
CREE
CREE
CREE

TP
YOU UNDER-ESTIMATE ME.
OH BOY. ONLY ONE GUY?

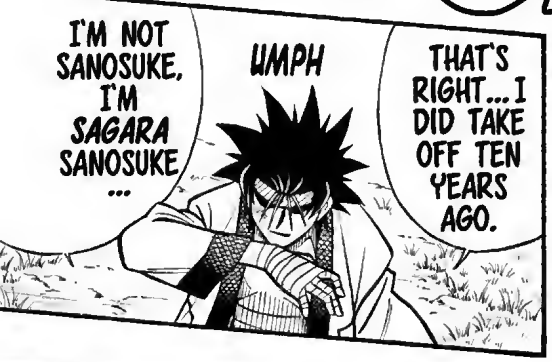
READ THIS WAY
YOU'RE HIGH QUALITY FOR ONE OF FUDOSAWA'S GANG.
I HATE UNNECESSARY INTERRUPTIONS. ONE-ON-ONE FIGHTS ARE THE MOST INTEREST-ING.
SHA
I'M NOT ONE OF HIS GOONS. I'M JUST A FIGHT MERCHANT.
NOW, LET'S HURRY UP AND...
IS THERE SOMETHING ON MY FACE?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?


...DAD...
!


...SANO-SUKE...
TP
YOU'RE ...


SANO-SUKE...
TP
AND APPLE CHEEKS, ŌTA...
...IS MY BROTHER?
TP
TP
THAT MEANS FORE-HALF...
...IS MY SISTER UKI!

HMPH !!
?!
THWONK


I'M NOT SANOSUKE, I'M SAGARA SANOSUKE...
HMPH
THAT'S RIGHT... I DID TAKE OFF TEN YEARS AGO.

...BUT SOMEONE WHO SIDES WITH FUDŌSAWA IS NOT MY SON!
I DON'T KNOW IF HE'S ALIVE OR NOT...
I DID HAVE A SON NAMED SANOSUKE, BUT HE'S BEEN GONE FOR TEN YEARS, EVER SINCE HE WENT WITH THE FRAUDULENT SEKIHŌ ARMY.
DON'T YOU CALL ME "DAD" SO LIGHTLY !!
TP

...I AM THE FIGHT MERCHANT ZANZA.
AND NOW...

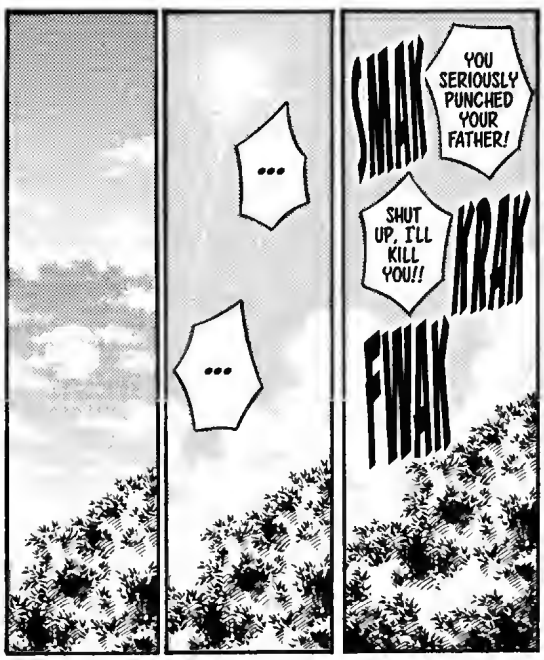
AND IN PLACE OF YOUR FATHER, KAMISHIMOEMON WILL BEAT SOME SENSE INTO YOU, BODY AND SOUL.
HEH
...COME.
YOU AT LEAST HAVE THE SAME NAME AS MY SON.
GET READY, DELINQUENT DAD!!
COME ON, YOU UNGRATEFUL SON!!
BLOOO

URAH !!
ORAHH !!
BAMBAMBAMBAM
SHAKK
!!
FHIP

CURSE YOU!!
SUPER MOVE— FATHER'S TORNADO TOSS!!
URYAHH!
KSAAAA
SUPER MOVE—
STOP PLAYING AROUND!!!
ZOOM

PFF
SIZZ

—FATHER'S BURNING SOUL!!!
HOW'S THAT!
...
HOT!

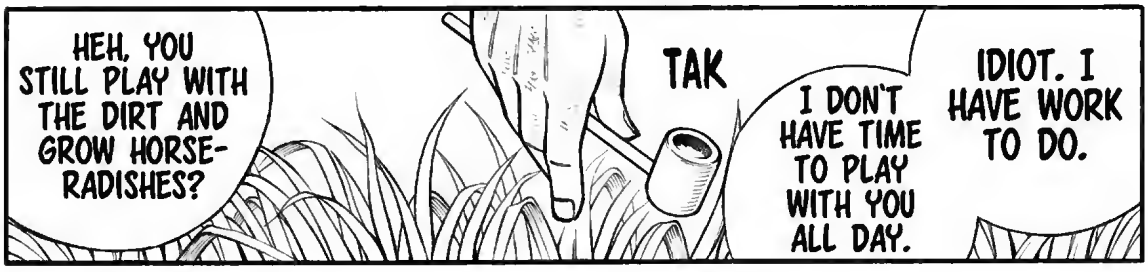

...
...

SMAK
YOU SERIOUSLY PUNCHED YOUR FATHER!
SHUT UP, I'LL KILL YOU!!
KRAK
FWAK

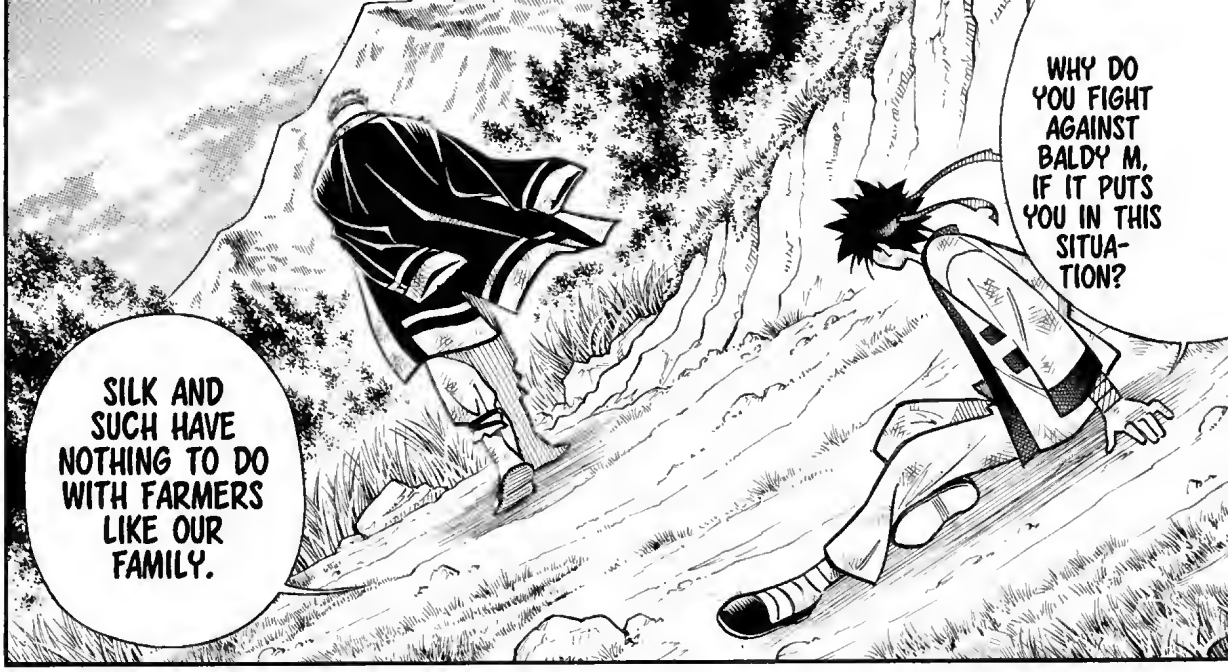
BOOSH
I SAID, STOP PLAYING AROUND!!

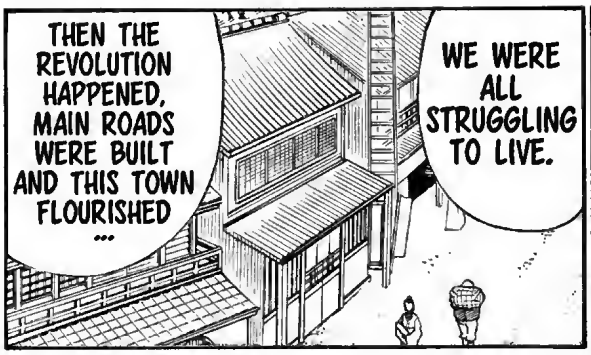
FWUMP
FWUMP

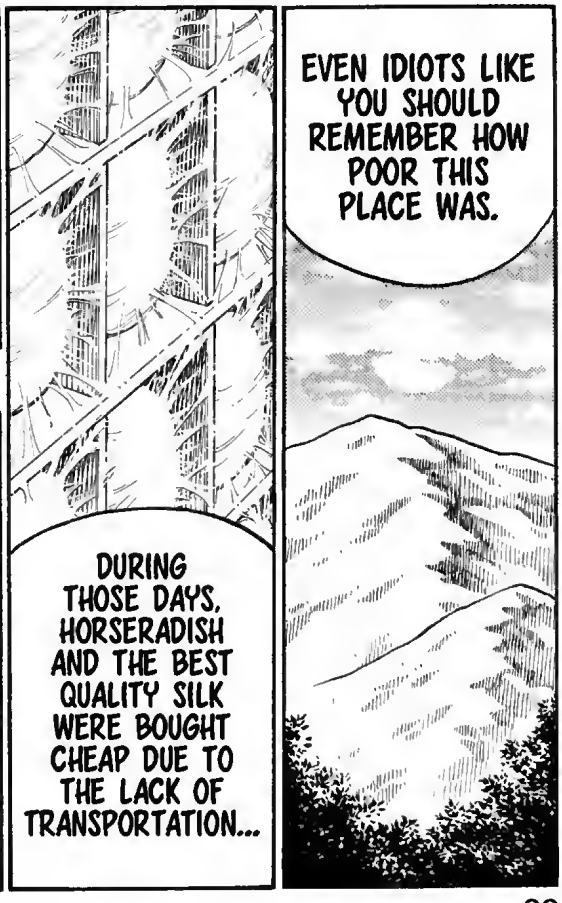
HAA
HAA
HAA
HAA
HAA
HAA
HAA
OH SHOOT. IT'S ALREADY LATE...
WE'LL HAVE TO SETTLE THIS ANOTHER DAY.
UMPH
ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY?


HEH. YOU STILL PLAY WITH THE DIRT AND GROW HORSE-RADISHES?
TAK
I DON'T HAVE TIME TO PLAY WITH YOU ALL DAY.
IDIOT. I HAVE WORK TO DO.

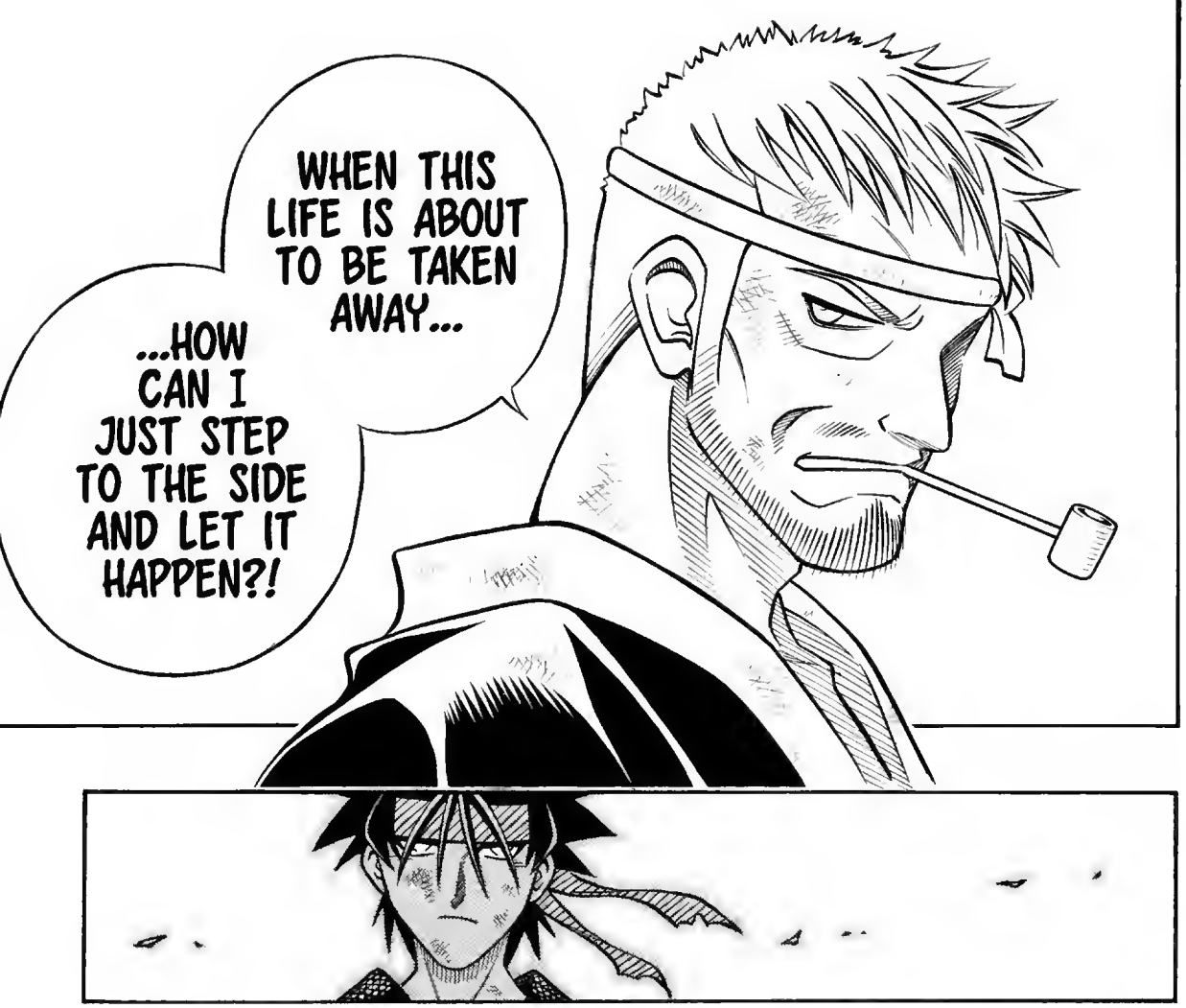
I DON'T WANT UKI AND ŌTA TO SUFFER TOO MUCH.
WE'RE MAKING WOVEN HATS AT HOME, SACRIFICING SLEEP THIS YEAR.
TP
THE FARM WAS DESTROYED BY FUDŌSAWA AND WON'T BE ANY USE FOR A WHILE.


WHY DO YOU FIGHT AGAINST BALDY M, IF IT PUTS YOU IN THIS SITUA-TION?
SILK AND SUCH HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH FARMERS LIKE OUR FAMILY.

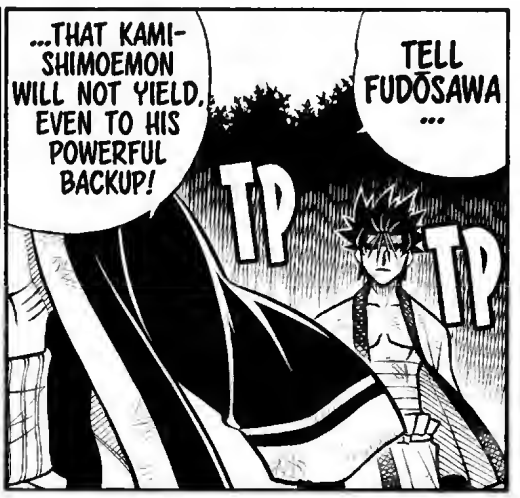

THEN THE REVOLUTION HAPPENED, MAIN ROADS WERE BUILT AND THIS TOWN FLOURISHED ...
WE WERE ALL STRUGGLING TO LIVE.

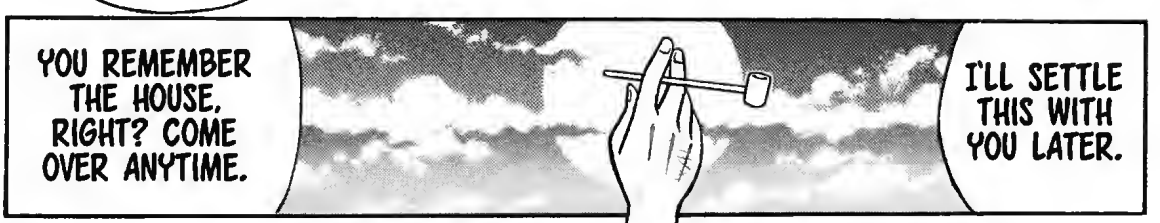

EVEN IDIOTS LIKE YOU SHOULD REMEMBER HOW POOR THIS PLACE WAS.
DURING THOSE DAYS, HORSERADISH AND THE BEST QUALITY SILK WERE BOUGHT CHEAP DUE TO THE LACK OF TRANSPORTATION...

WE'VE FINALLY COME TO THE POINT WHERE WE CAN EAT BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND DINNER WITH BOTH RICE *AND* A MAIN DISH.

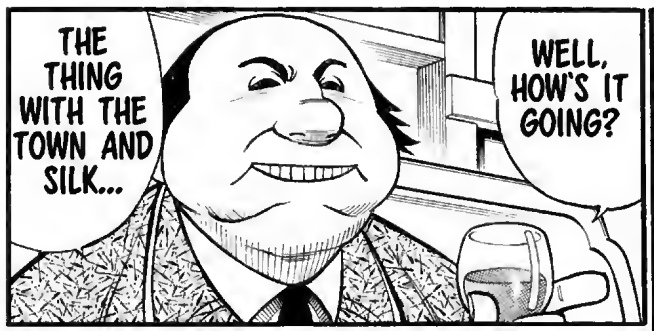

WHEN THIS LIFE IS ABOUT TO BE TAKEN AWAY...
...HOW CAN I JUST STEP TO THE SIDE AND LET IT HAPPEN?!

BALDY M WAS BRAGGING ABOUT THAT. WHAT IS IT?
BACKUP ...
SOME ISHIN SHISHI. I DON'T KNOW THE DETAILS, BUT HE SEEMS TO BE HIGH UP.

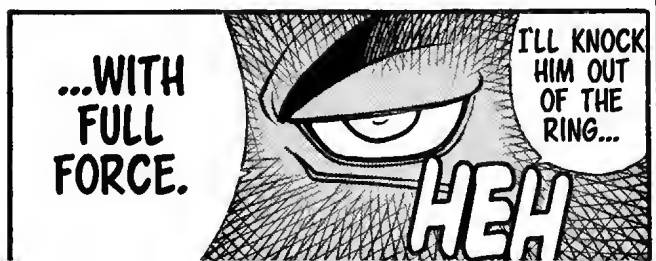

...THAT KAMI-SHIMOEMON WILL NOT YIELD, EVEN TO HIS POWERFUL BACKUP!
TELL FUDŌSAWA ...
TP
TP


YOU REMEMBER THE HOUSE, RIGHT? COME OVER ANYTIME.
I'LL SETTLE THIS WITH YOU LATER.

...
I'M SORRY TO HAVE BROUGHT YOU INTO SUCH A RURAL AREA, UNCLE.
KLAK


THE THING WITH THE TOWN AND SILK...
WELL, HOW'S IT GOING?

...BUT IT'S ALL JUST A MATTER OF TIME.
ONE STUBBORN MAN IS GETTING IN THE WAY...

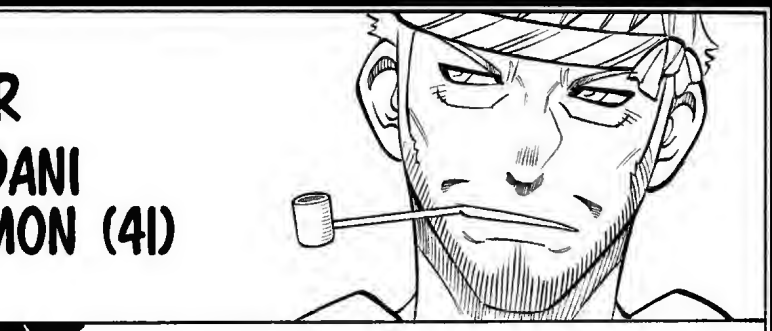

...WITH FULL FORCE.
I'LL KNOCK HIM OUT OF THE RING...
HEH

I'VE RELIED ON YOU SO MUCH SINCE I WAS A SUMO WRESTLER.
HA HA, IT WAS QUITE A HASSLE WHEN YOU ALMOST KILLED YOUR BOSS.

READ THIS WAY
SORRY. SORRY.
DAD, YOU ARE SO LATE !!
...
WHAT? FIVE? GOOD JOB, YOU WORKED HARD!
LEAVE THE REST TO KAMISHI-MOEMON!
DID YOU GET INTO A FIGHT AGAIN?!
SO ŌTA, HOW MANY DID YOU MAKE?
...
...GOOD HAPPEN?
HE'S UNUSUALLY HAPPY
DID SOME-THING...
I COME THIS FAR, AND THERE ARE STILL ISHIN SHISHI.
...HMPH.
...EVERYTHING I DO JUST ADDS TO MY STRESS.

Rurouni
Kenshin

FATHER
HIGASHIDANI
KAMISHIMOEMON (41)



FIRST SON
SAGARA
SANOSUKE (19)

FIRST DAUGHTER
HIGASHIDANI
UKI (16)

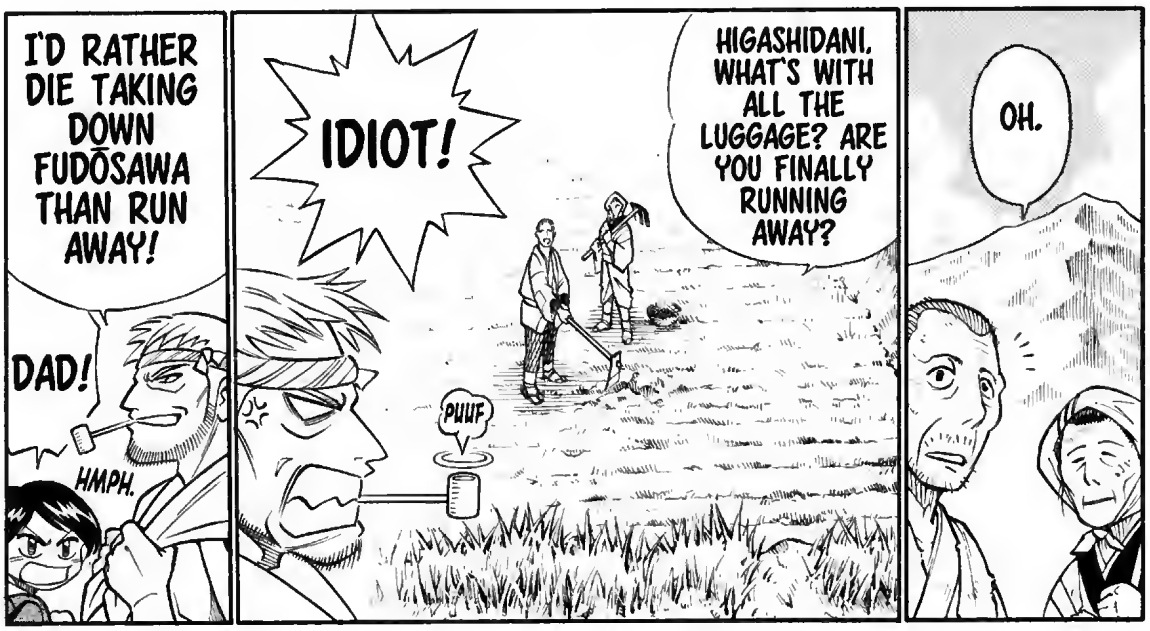
SECOND SON
HIGASHIDANI
ŌTA (6)

Act 230

A Man's Back 3: Portrait of a Family

THE NEXT DAY
CHIRP CHIRP
DONE !!
WELL, THIS IS HOW IT GOES WHEN I GET SERIOUS.
YAAAAAY!
WE MADE IT!!
ZZ ZZ
WRAP THEM ALL UP!!
HEE
LET'S GO TO TOWN.
BLINK

WHEN ALL CAN SEE THE PATH CURVES WIDE—
ONLY A FOOL WALKS THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW—


I'D RATHER DIE TAKING DOWN FUDŌSAWA THAN RUN AWAY!
DAD!
HMPH.
IDIOT!
PUUF
HIGASHIDANI, WHAT'S WITH ALL THE LUGGAGE? ARE YOU FINALLY RUNNING AWAY?
OH.

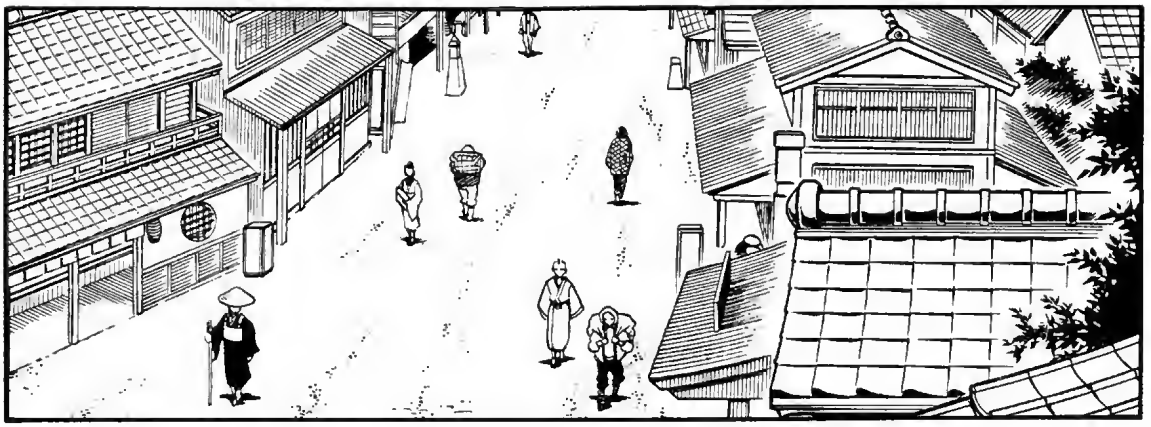
YOU'LL BE LIVING IN PEACE BY AUTUMN, I PROMISE!
SHEESH.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. YOU GUYS JUST GROW LOTS OF HORSE-RADISH IN MY STEAD.

IF THE TOWN GETS TAKEN, WE'LL ALL BE...
I REALLY WANT HIM TO SUCCEED. IT'S NOT ONLY ABOUT THE SERI-CULTURE...
HE'S STILL THE SAME, EVEN AFTER SUFFERING SO MUCH.

THERE'S NO HOPE FOR A HARVEST THIS YEAR. AND MAYBE NOT EVER.
...HOW CRUEL.
AAARGH!!
SHUT UP. SHUT UP! JUST GET OUT!
FARM? DON'T YOU MEAN BARREN WASTELAND ?
STOMP
STOMP
DON'T STEP ON OUR FARM WITHOUT PERMIS-SION!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE!
STARE

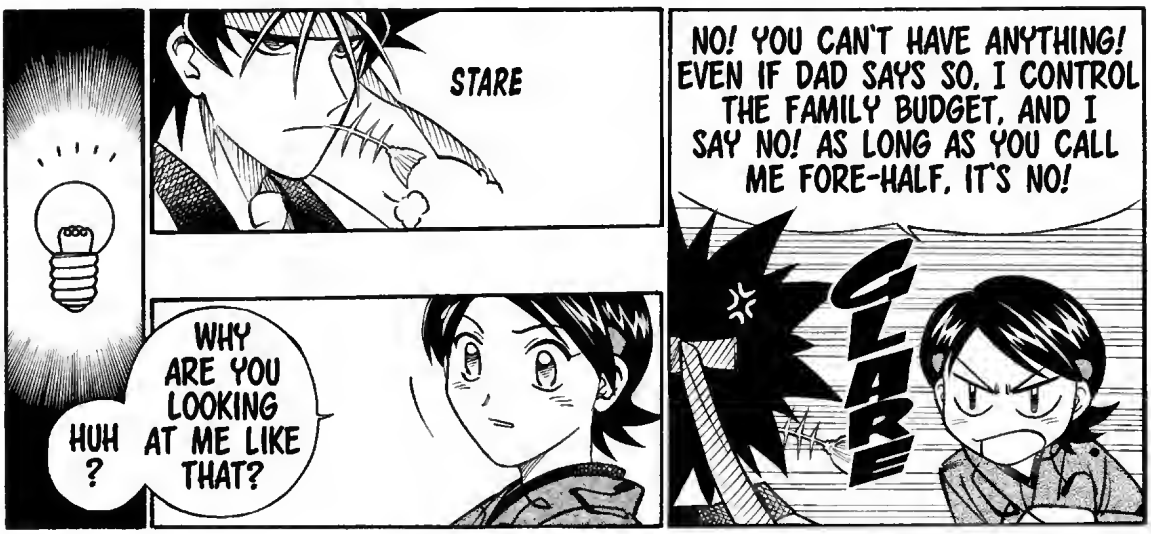
NICE TO MEET YOU...
...NICE TO MEET YOU.
YO.
TP

COME WITH US. I'LL TREAT YOU TO LUNCH.
I HEARD YOU HELPED MY KIDS THE OTHER DAY.



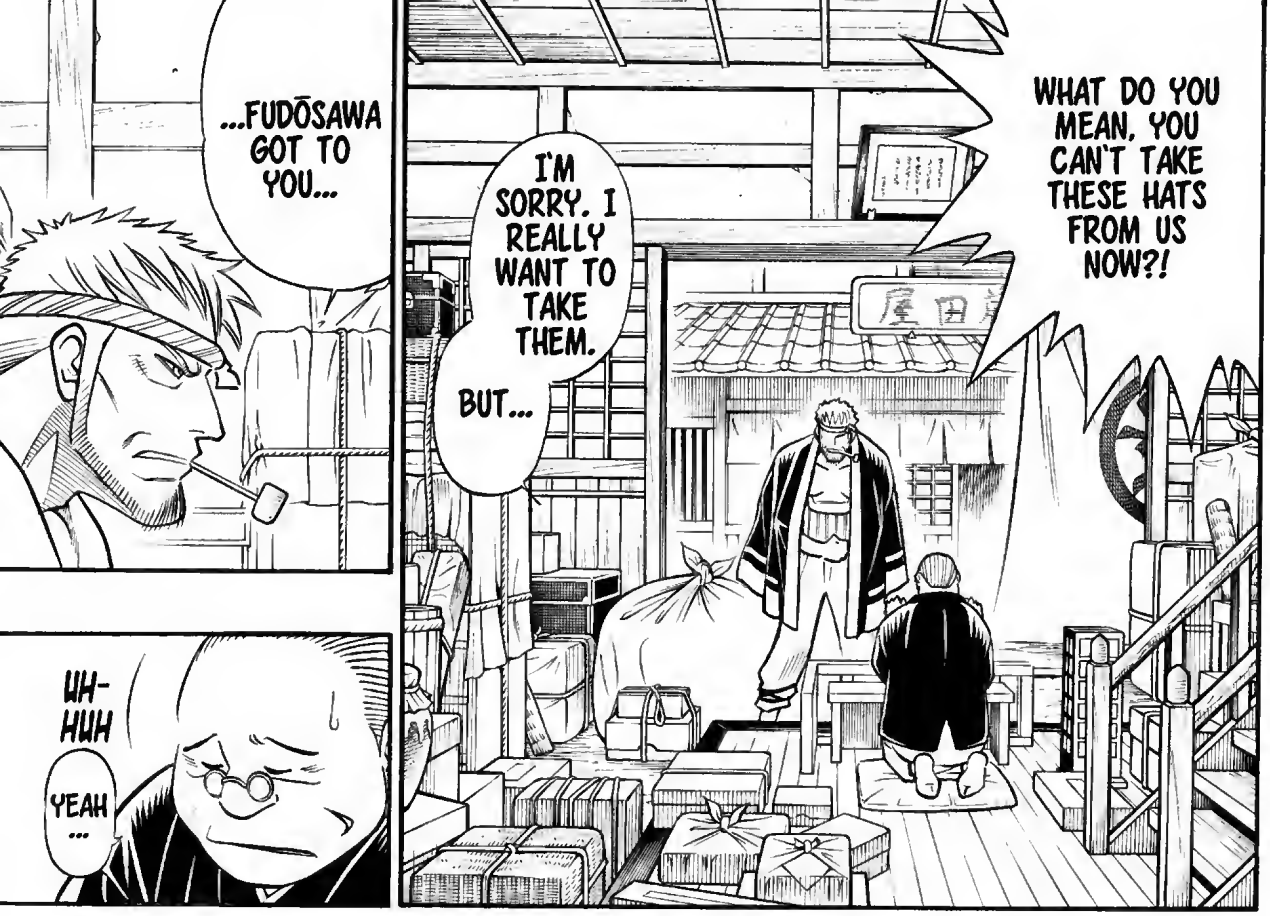
YOU GUYS GO AHEAD AND EAT HERE.
I'LL DROP THESE OFF FIRST.
そば処 松屋
OKAY.
SOBA PLACE MATSUYA

WHAT? TEMPURA SOBA?
ŌTA, WHAT DO YOU WANT?
HEY, FORE-HALF.
TWO TEMPURA SOBAS, PLEASE.
OH, I'LL HAVE THAT, TOO. EXCUSE ME.


STARE
NO! YOU CAN'T HAVE ANYTHING! EVEN IF DAD SAYS SO, I CONTROL THE FAMILY BUDGET, AND I SAY NO! AS LONG AS YOU CALL ME FORE-HALF, IT'S NO!
HUH ?
WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?
GLARE

Misunder-standing
SHE USED TO BE A CUTE GIRL WHO FOLLOWED ME AROUND SAYING "BROTHER, BROTHER"...
...BUT I GUESS PEOPLE CHANGE.
I KNOW! HE'S A BIT EMBARRASSED TO BE IN FRONT OF A BLOOMING FLOWER IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OF SHINSHŪ. THAT'S UNDERSTAND-ABLE. IT'S INEVITABLE!
CALLING ME FORE-HALF IS JUST A COVER-UP.
WHAT THE HECK?
SO UN-PREDICTABLE...
YOU CAN HAVE ONE, TOO!
Menu
ALL RIGHT. I GUESS THAT'S OKAY.
...
HEY.
AREN'T YOU BEING TOO PROTECTIVE OF APPLE CHEEKS, THERE?
HEY ŌTA, WIPE YOUR MOUTH AFTER YOU EAT.
DON'T FORGET TO BRUSH YOUR TEETH WHEN YOU GET HOME. YOU'LL GET CAVITIES.
THAT WAS GOOD.

WE DON'T NEED COMMENTS LIKE THAT FROM A STRANGER!
HUH?
FUMP
STOP INTERFERING IN ANOTHER FAMILY'S BUSINESS!
UM.
!!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?! SAY IT AGAIN!
TRAVEL GOODS SAKURAYA
荷駄屋桜
WAS THAT...
...DAD...


...FUDŌSAWA GOT TO YOU...
I'M SORRY. I REALLY WANT TO TAKE THEM.
BUT...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU CAN'T TAKE THESE HATS FROM US NOW?!
UH-HUH
YEAH...

SOME HIGH-UP ISHIN SHISHI FINALLY CAME.
NOT ONLY THAT, BUT THE RUMORED BACKUP OF HIS...

I AM REALLY SORRY...
BUT I CAN'T THROW MY WHOLE FAMILY OUT INTO THE STREETS...
HIS PRIME TARGET, THE SILK, IS NEARING ITS FINAL LARGE SHIPMENT OF THE YEAR. IF THEY MISS THIS, THERE WON'T BE ANYTHING UNTIL NEXT SPRING...
THEY'RE GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT TAKING THIS TOWN.

WHY THE LONG FACE?
TP
THEY ARE SUPERB QUALITY HATS, MADE WITH EXPERTISE BY THE HIGASHIDANI FAMILY. PLEASE SELL THEM.
I'LL LEAVE THESE AS AN APOLOGY.
TP
TP
FLAP
IT SEEMS I'VE PUT YOU IN A TOUGH SPOT...
TROMP TROMP TROMP

DON'T GLARE SO MUCH.
FUDŌ-SAWA...
HEH
GRRRR

BUT IT'S BEST FOR YOU TO SURRENDER SOON.
SO YOU'RE KAMISHI-MOEMON. YOU LOOK AS STUBBORN AS RUMORS SAY YOU ARE.

AS THE ONE TO SET THESE APPROPRIATE PRICES, MY NEPHEW WILL BECOME THE GATEWAY TO ALL TRADE.
TAKING THE TOWN DOESN'T MEAN WE'LL TAKE EVERYTHING. WE JUST WANT TO SET AN APPROPRIATE PRICE.

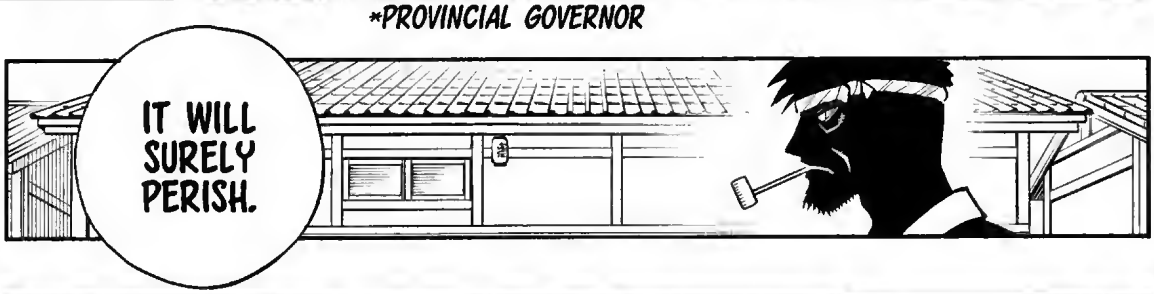
HMPH

...IS THE SAME AS TELLING US TO WITHER AND DIE!
"APPROPRIATE" FROM AN EX-ISHIN SHISHI PIG WHO FATTENS HIMSELF UP...

I HAVE NO INTENTION OF FIGHTING TODAY. WE'RE JUST HERE TO SAY HI.
MY UNCLE FROM TOKYO INSISTED ON IT.
TP
HEH

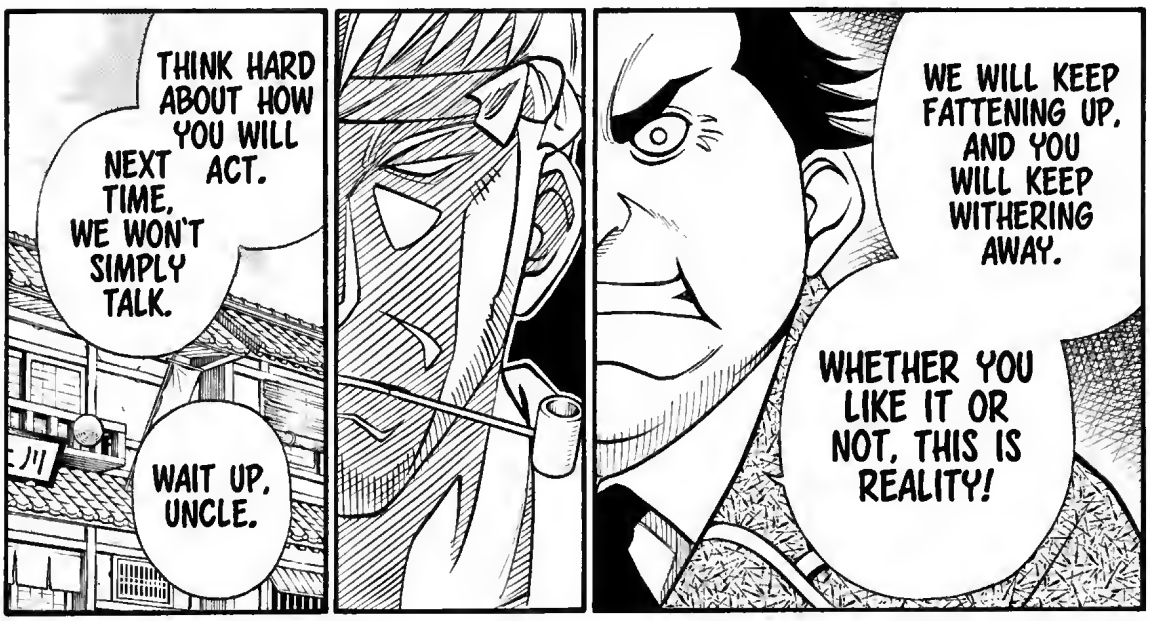
FWIISH
HOW DARE YOU SPEAK TO HIM LIKE THAT!
HIS IMPORTANT UNCLE HAS COME TO GIVE YOU YOUR LAST CHANCE...
FWA
?!
AAK
DIDN'T YOU FIGURE THAT OUT AFTER I BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF 50 OF YOUR GOONS?
YOU SHOULD ALREADY KNOW THAT TALKING TO ME IS USELESS.
HOWEVER...
WELL, IF THAT'S YOUR INTENTION, FINE.
YOUR FISTS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FASTER THAN YOUR MOUTH.

*PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR



YOU HAD NO CHANCE OF WINNING...
...FROM THE VERY BEGINNING.
名物
信州
地酒

MUSCLES HAVE NO CHANCE AGAINST THE POWER OF INFLUENCE.
NO MATTER HOW STUBBORN AND STRONG AT FISTFIGHTS YOU ARE, THIS IS REALITY.


THINK HARD ABOUT HOW YOU WILL ACT NEXT TIME, WE WON'T SIMPLY TALK.
WAIT UP, UNCLE.
WE WILL KEEP FATTENING UP, AND YOU WILL KEEP WITHERING AWAY.
WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT, THIS IS REALITY!

TMP
HEY, YOU TWO.
YEAH ?
PAY HIM BACK FOR THE TWO WHO ARE UN-CONSCIOUS.
FWUM
THAT SEEMS ONLY FAIR.
HE BEAT UP TWO OF OUR GUYS. I HAVE TO GET HIM BACK FOR THAT.
DOUBLE THE PAIN...
TP
TP
EXCEPT, ACCORDING TO OUR RULES...
...IF THE TOWN DIES, WE LOSE EVERYTHING...
WE'LL JUST BREAK YOUR ARMS !!
FWISH
DON'T WORRY, WE WON'T KILL YOU!!!

DUSH
!

DAD!!
DASH
HAA
HAA
IMMP!
...HEY, FIGHT MERCHANT!
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS!!

Rurouni
Kenshin

Act 231
A Man's Back 4: Explosive
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?!
Jump
...HEY, FIGHT MERCHANT!

...THIS IS MY FIGHT. I DON'T WANT ANY UNNECESSARY INTERRUP-TIONS.
FSSH
...DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY, KID...
I'M SORRY TO HAVE TO POINT THIS OUT, BUT YOU'RE USELESS NOW.
THE SITUATION WILL BE ALL SETTLED NOW THAT I AM HERE.
HEH
DON'T WORRY. WE'LL PAY YOU YOUR ALLOWANCE. HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT? EH?
HMM.
IS THIS THE FIGHT MERCHANT YOU MENTIONED LAST NIGHT?
ZISH

TP
NO, I'VE SEEN YOU BEFORE.
WHAT? WHY WOULD I HAVE MET SOMEONE AS LOW AS YOU?
DON'T GET NEAR ME.
TP
TP
I'VE...
...SEEN YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE, HAVEN'T I?
THAT LAUGHABLE FACE, I WOULDN'T FORGET IT.
IT WAS—

...FROM THE JIN-E INCIDENT!!
PI...
I KNOW, YOU'RE THE PORK BUN...
REFER TO VOLUME 2.
KICK!
!!

ARE YOU PLAYING KING OF THE HILL WITH ALL THE YAKUZA, EVEN WAY OUT HERE IN THE COUNTRY?
IF YOU'RE GOING TO PLAY KING OF THE HILL, AT LEAST EVOLVE FROM A PIG INTO A MONKEY OR SOMETHING.
SHEESH!
SNERK.
HE'S SO GOOD AT INSULTS
HEH HEH HEH
...GRRRR...
HEE HEE HEE
HAHAHA
LET'S GO, FUDŌSAWA!
UNCLE?
LET'S JUST GO!
おかぎ
...
THOSE WHO DON'T KNOW THEIR WORTH DIE EARLY. REMEMBER THAT.
A GUY WITH AN M-SHAPED BALD SPOT DOESN'T DESERVE TO SPEAK LIKE A POLICEMAN I KNOW.
LET'S GO!
TPP
TPP
WE'LL CALL IT QUITS FOR TODAY!!

READ THIS WAY
...
HMPH ...
PHEW...
YA-A-AAY!
TAKE THAT, YOU PUNKS!
YOU CHASED AWAY FUDŌSAWA !
EEK!
THWAK!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "HMPH"?!
YOU'RE THE FOOL!
I'M JEALOUS, YOU FOOL!
SMAK
CRAK
FWAK
CUT IT OUT!
YOU IDIOT! I WAS HOLDING BACK SO HARD...
...AND THEN YOU RETURNED THEIR TAUNT, WITH INTEREST!
FWO

WHAT'S THE MATTER, UNCLE?
RE-TREATING BECAUSE OF JUST ONE GUY?
I COULD SQUISH HIM ANY TIME WITH MY POWERS!
NO!
DID YOU THINK I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO BEAT HIM?
IF HE BECOMES OUR ENEMY, EVEN AN ARMY WOULDN'T ASSURE OUR VICTORY...
THE PROBLEM IS THE MAN WHO SOMETIMES ASSOCIATES WITH THAT FIGHT MERCHANT.
...ALL OF THE CHŌSHŪ POLITICIANS WILL BECOME OUR ENEMIES...
IF WE TAKE ONE WRONG STEP, STARTING WITH YAMAGATA ARITOMO...
IF HE GETS INVOLVED, THE TOWN WILL BE THE LEAST OF OUR PROBLEMS...
SHIVER
SHIVER
SHIVER
IF THAT HAPPENS, MY LIFE IN POLITICS IS OVER...

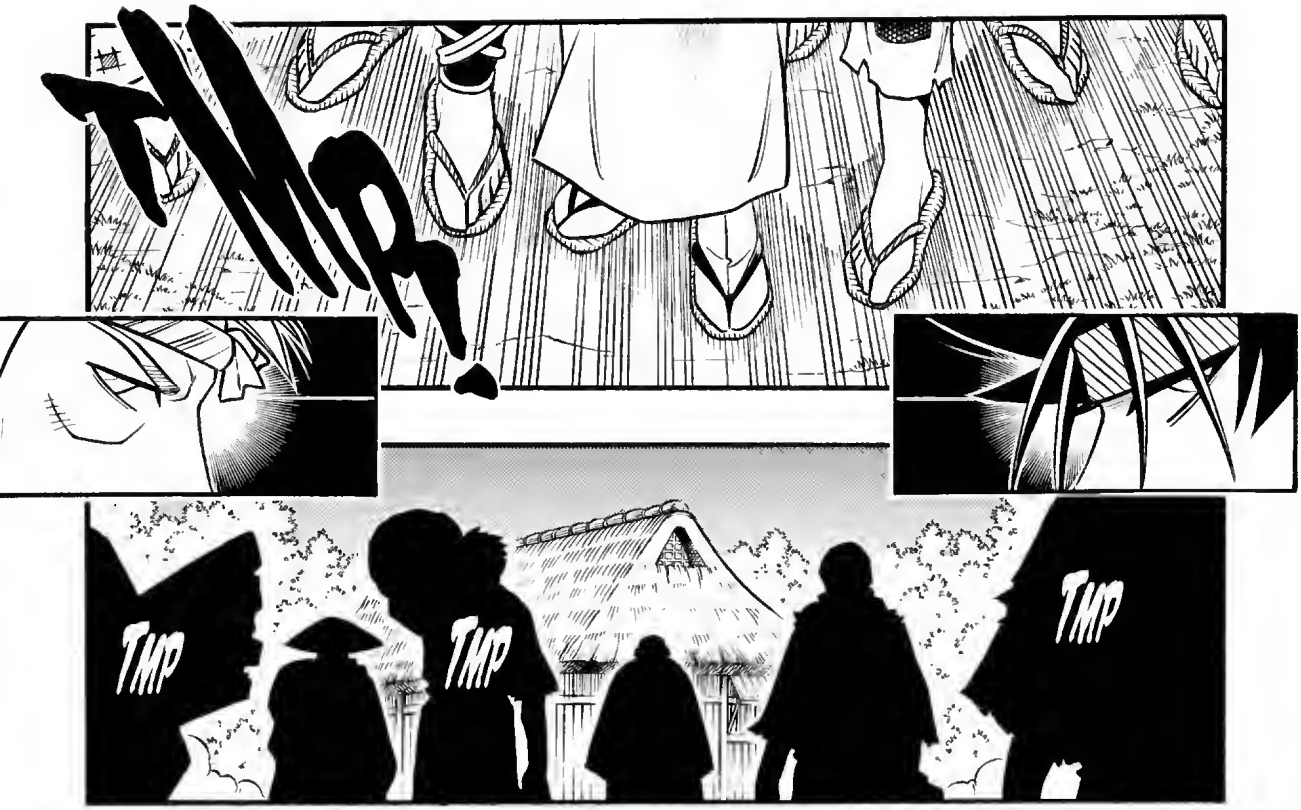
TMP
FUDŌ-SAWA!
WE HAVE NO MORE TIME TO WASTE.
TMP
YOU WILL FINISH THIS TONIGHT.
WE'LL FINISH THIS BEFORE THAT MAN GETS INVOLVED AND COMES OUT HERE.
THERE IS NO NEED TO BE CHOOSY ABOUT METHODS!
ANNIHILATE THEM AND DESTROY ALL THE EVIDENCE!
ERASE THEM!!
ROGER.
HEH
WHOOOOOOO
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THOSE WORDS.
PUSSY-FOOTING AROUND IS NOT IN MY NATURE!

...AND WE GOT IN ANOTHER FIGHT...
NOTHING GOOD HAPPENED TODAY...
HUMM.
THOSE HATS DIDN'T GET US ANY MONEY...
HOOO HOOO
AND YOU'RE THE WORST OF ALL!!
GRRR!
DANG RIGHT.
...THAT I AM PLANNING TO SCOLD HIM ALL NIGHT, SO I BROUGHT HIM HERE.
THIS GUY IS SO UTTERLY OVER-THE-TOP STUPID...
PUFF
ASK THE GUY WHO DRAGGED ME HERE.
WHY ARE YOU SITTING IN OUR HOUSE LIKE YOU BELONG HERE?!
SMAK SMAK
DO IT AFTER DINNER SO YOU DON'T KICK UP DUST!!
KRAK
...!!

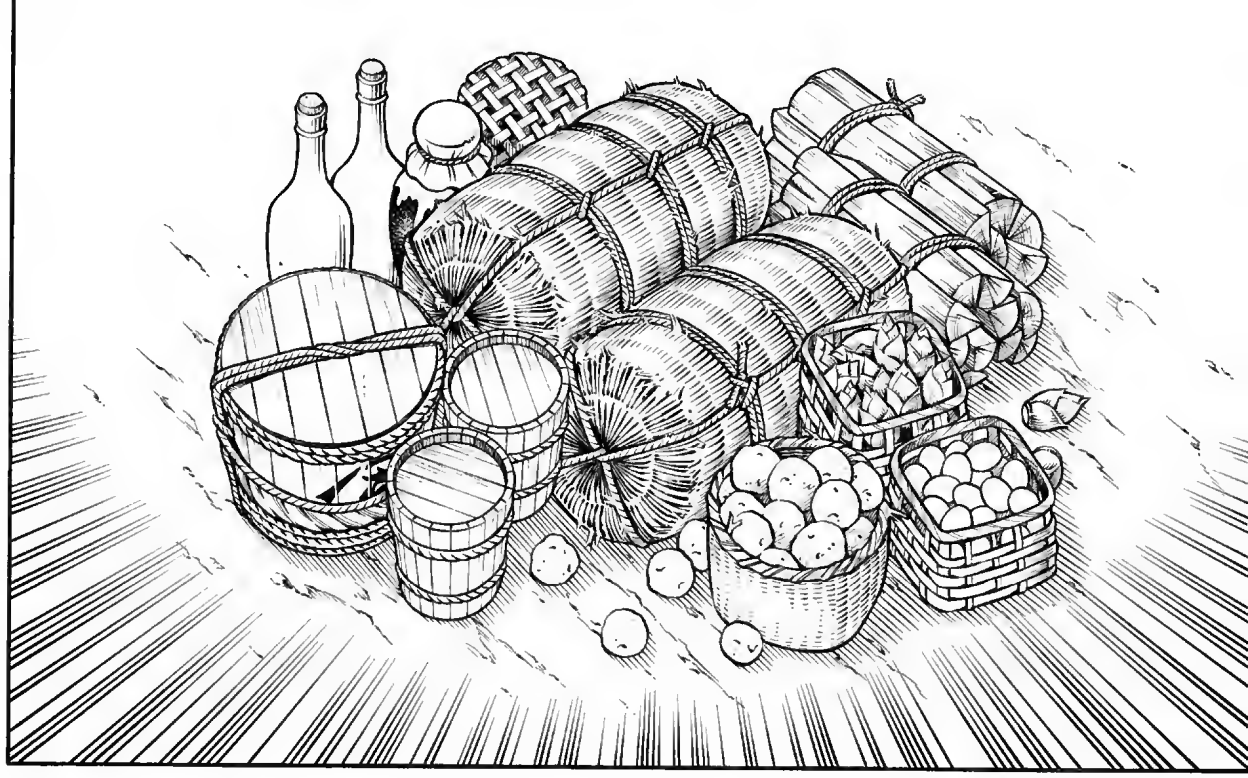
TP
ŌTA, TAKE THIS OVER THERE.
SHEESH!
PLOP
IS THAT RIGHT. I THOUGHT SHE GOT TIRED OF YOU AND LEFT.
IDIOT. MY WIFE AND I WERE VERY MUCH IN LOVE.
SHUP
SHE STARTED GETTING SICK AROUND THE TIME SHE GAVE BIRTH TO ŌTA, AND PASSED AWAY FROM A BAD COLD TWO YEARS AGO.
MY WIFE.

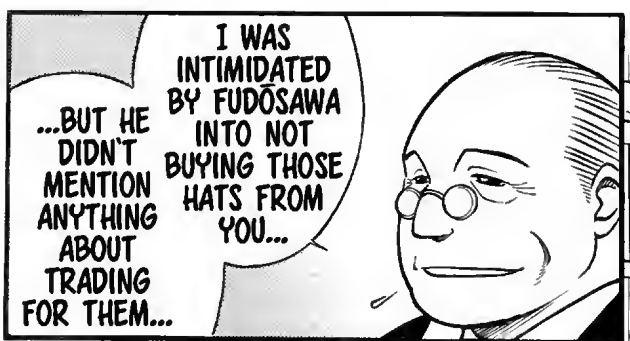
BONNN
...
...
BONNN

HEH
HE JUST WANTED TO EAT SOONER?!
WHA?!
SHLIP SHLOP
WELL, THAT'S DONE. LET'S GET TO THE EATING PART.
TOSS
...IS HE...


TMP!
TMP
TMP
TMP

...MASTER OF SAKURA-YA...
WHAT DO YOU WANT SO LATE AT NIGHT?
KNOK KNOK
...HIGA-SHIDANI.
YOU SEEM TO LACK PATIENCE.
STOP.
THWAK
SHA




I WAS INTIMIDATED BY FUDŌSAWA INTO NOT BUYING THOSE HATS FROM YOU...
...BUT HE DIDN'T MENTION ANYTHING ABOUT TRADING FOR THEM...

YOU'RE ALWAYS HELPING US.
THE VEGE-TABLES ARE TO THANK YOU.

EVERY-ONE...

WHAT IS THIS?
YAMMER
YAMMER
THE PAYMENT FOR THE HATS, THAT'S WHAT.

HIGASHI-DANI, WE'VE MADE A DECISION.
WE WILL FIGHT, TOO.
CLENCH!

...IN THE FOREFRONT ALL ALONE.
WE'VE ALL BEEN FORCED INTO THIS SITUATION, AND WE CAN'T LEAVE YOU...

...AND WIN TOGETHER!!
THAT'S RIGHT! FROM NOW ON, LET'S STAND TOGETHER, GET HURT TOGETHER...

THE IDIOT SPEAKS THE TRUTH.
YOU ARE SUCH A...
GRIP

AMATEUR FIGHTS CAN TURN INTO SOMETHING HORRIBLE.
HIGASHI-DANI!

SO YOU ALL JUST KEEP DOING WHAT YOU'VE BEEN DOING.
IF THAT HAPPENS, I WON'T BE HAPPY, EVEN IF WE WIN.

YOUR ENEMY IS THE YAKUZA, WHO ARE ALL USED TO FIGHTING. EVEN ALL OF YOU TOGETHER CAN'T BEAT THEM.

EVERY-ONE...
WAIT.

WE DON'T NEED TO BAND TOGETHER TO FIGHT.
IF OUR HEARTS ARE TOGETHER, IT IS AS THOUGH I HAVE A HUNDRED MEN WITH ME!
CLENCH
HIGA-SHIDANI...
AHH!
THE MASTER OF SAKURAYA HAS SOME LOGIC...
...BUT LOGIC DOES NOT WORK ON THE YAKUZA.
LET'S EAT ALL THIS WITH EVERYONE RIGHT NOW.
HEY UKI, GET MORE DISHES AND CHOP-STICKS!
IT WILL ALL BE OVER SOON.
THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY.
HUH?
EVERYONE, COME ON IN.
A PARTY WOULD BE NICE.

I'M NOT SAYING YOU SHOULD FIGHT ALONE.
MUTTER
HEY.
WHAT ARE YOU THINK-ING?

HEH
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TAUNTED PORK BUN.
DON'T ACT LIKE YOU KNOW EVERY-THING.

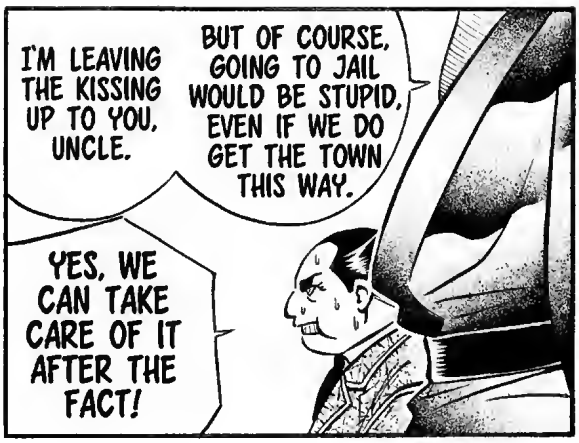
EVEN IF YOU WIN, YOU WILL BE CRUSHED BY PORK BUN'S INFLUENCE.
IF YOU REALLY PLAN TO FIGHT ALONE, DON'T.
TSK

...THAT AT LEAST GAVE ME AN IDEA OF HOW TO SETTLE THIS...
BUT...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN THINGS TO ME.
JUST WATCH.
WHAT ?

WINNING IN FISTFIGHTS IS NOT IMPORTANT. TRUE VICTORY IS PROTECTING THE TOWN.

FWOOM
FWOO
FWOO
FWOOM

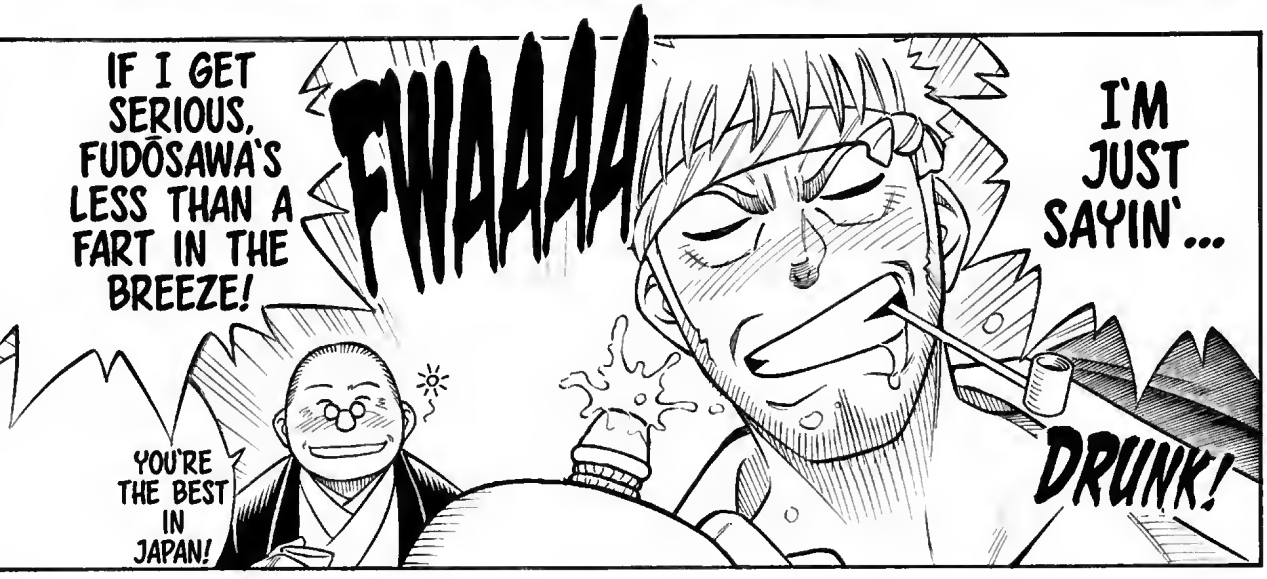

I'M LEAVING THE KISSING UP TO YOU, UNCLE.
BUT OF COURSE, GOING TO JAIL WOULD BE STUPID, EVEN IF WE DO GET THE TOWN THIS WAY.
YES, WE CAN TAKE CARE OF IT AFTER THE FACT!

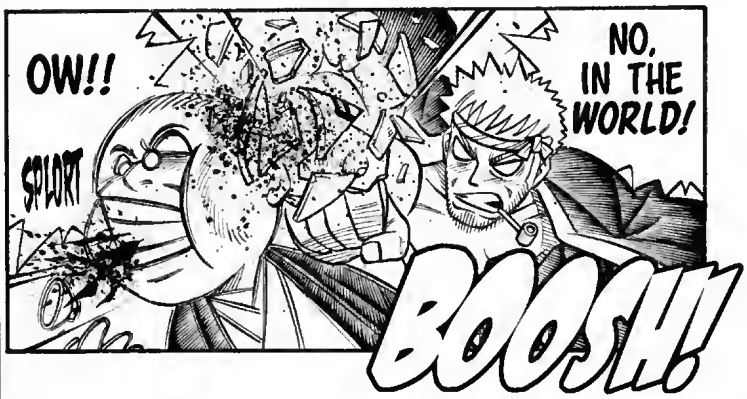
WITH YOUR MANPOWER AND MY INFLUENTIAL POWERS, WE'LL SETTLE THIS IMMEDIATELY!
WE STILL HAVE TIME, SINCE BATTOSAI IS NOT INVOLVED.

HEH HEH HEH... A GOOD BEGINNING IS THE BEST PART OF A FIGHT.
THE YAKUZA SHOULD ALWAYS DO IT THIS WAY.
HEH

FUDŌSAWA'S 200! ANYONE WHO DARES OPPOSE US SHALL BE KILLED!!!
LET'S GO, MEN!!!
BAAAAAA!!

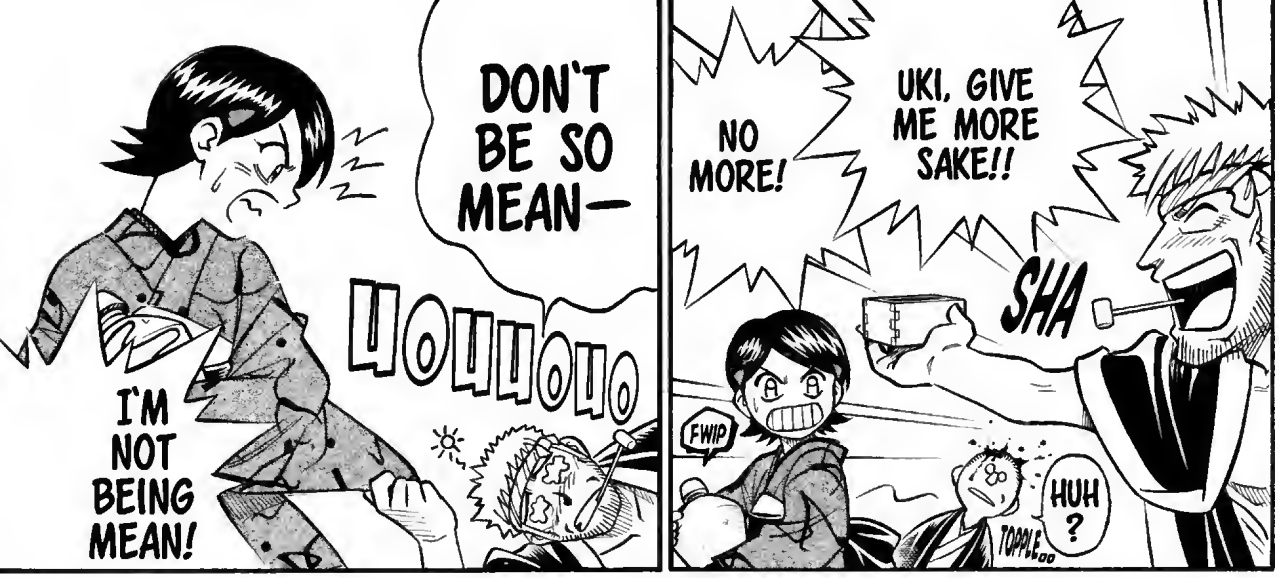
Rurouni Kenshin





Act 232—A Man's Back 5: Character of Evil

Act 232
A Man's Back 5: Character of Evil


I'M NOT BEING MEAN!
DON'T BE SO MEAN—
HOHOHO
NO MORE!
UKI, GIVE ME MORE SAKE!!
SHA
FWIP
TOPPLE
HUH ?

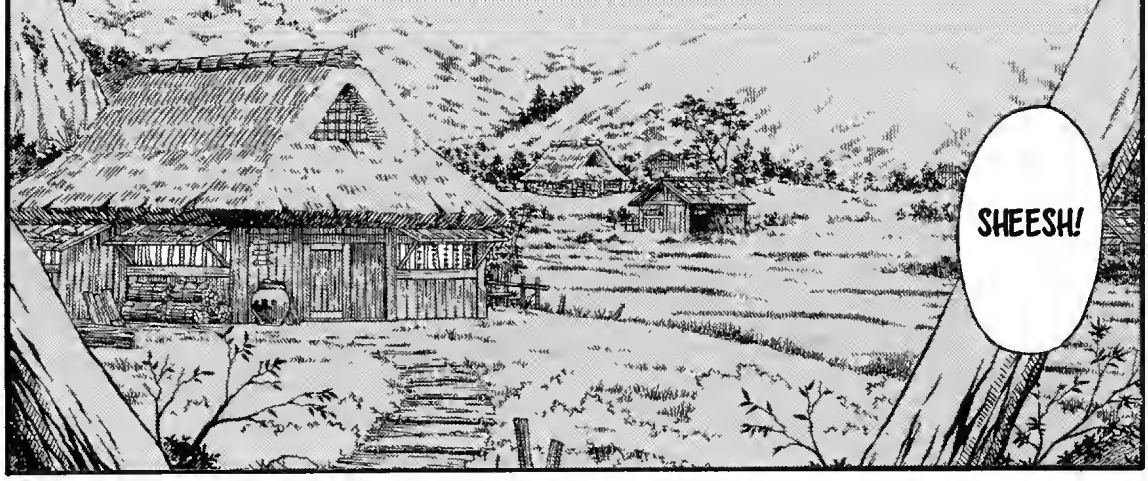
YOU AREN'T AS YOUNG AS YOU THINK! YOU'RE GETTING A BOOZE BELLY. YOU CAN'T HIDE IT WITH YOUR WRAP!
WHEN YOU START FALLING OVER, YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH. DAD, YOU'RE GETTING OLD, SO TAKE BETTER CARE OF YOUR BODY!

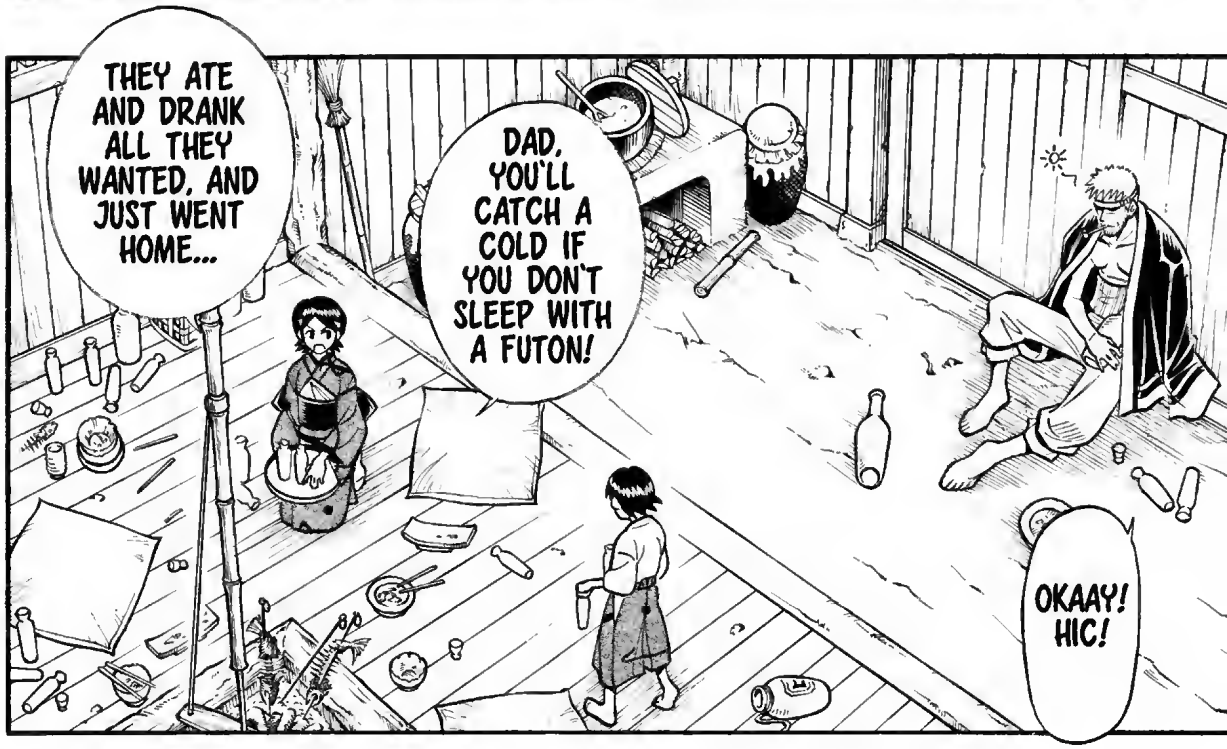
UKI, YOU ARE SO PROTECTIVE.
FIGHFIGH
THAT WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO THE BOTTOMLESS MAN.

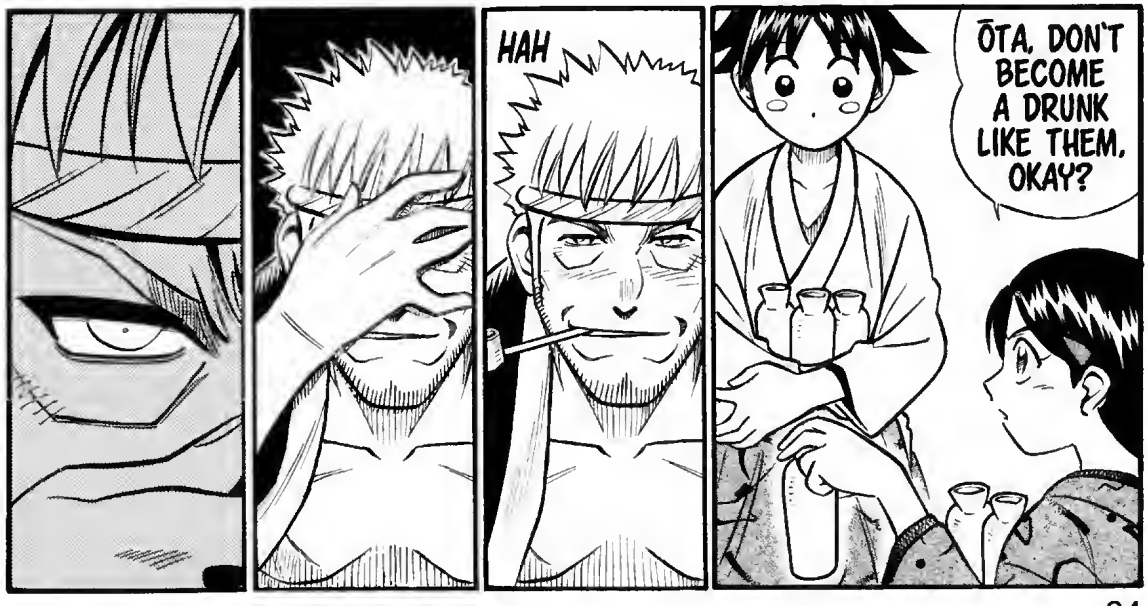
WAAAAAH ??!
HEY ŌTA, DRINK IN MY PLACE!!
BLUB
BLUB
BLUB
SHEESH. I HAVE NO CHOICE.
HOW PROTEC-TIVE.
A LITTLE BIT WON'T HURT.
YOU DRUNKARD !!
HAA
HAA

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME THAT.
I'M A PROTECTIVE WORRYWART.
HMPH!
I JUST DID!
THIS DRUNKARD!!
HOO
BOO
HOO
AREN'T YOU GOING TO WORRY ABOUT ME, UKI?
HOW CAN I NOT WORRY ABOUT OUR THREE-PERSON FAMILY!
YES, I'M WORRIED.
SMIRK
SHA

THAT SHORT-TEMPERED OLD MAN IS DOING WELL.
HOLDING HIMSELF BACK FROM EXPLODING TO PROTECT UKI, ŌTA, AND THE TOWN.
IT'S ONLY NATURAL...
...BUT THIS ISN'T MY PLACE.
HE WAS UNABLE TO PROTECT WHO HE WANTED TO PROTECT THE MOST.
PROTECTING AND FIGHTING, AND FIGHTING AND PROTECTING. REPEATING IT OVER AND OVER.
TOO TIRED...
NO MORE...
...WERE THE MOST PAINFUL FOR HIM TO SPIT OUT...
THOSE WORDS...


SHEESH!

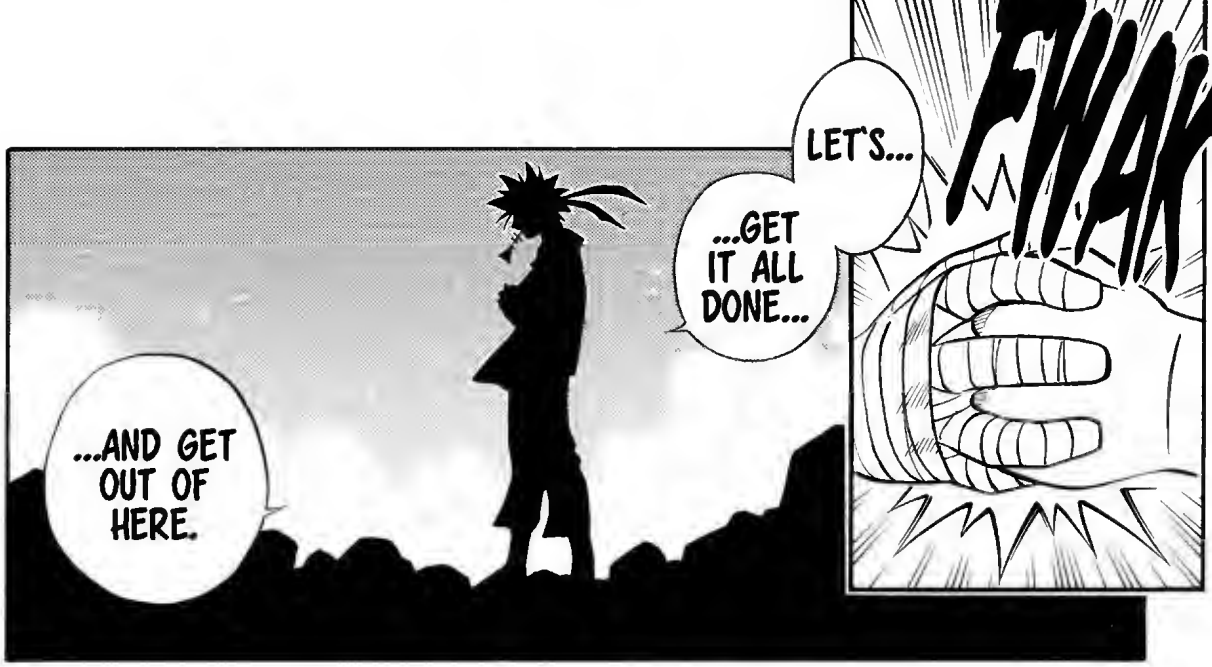

THEY ATE AND DRANK ALL THEY WANTED, AND JUST WENT HOME...
DAD, YOU'LL CATCH A COLD IF YOU DON'T SLEEP WITH A FUTON!
OKAAY! HIC!


HAH
ŌTA, DON'T BECOME A DRUNK LIKE THEM, OKAY?

NOW...

SHUP

KLATTER
WHOOOO
...
DAD ...?


FWAK
LET'S...
...GET IT ALL DONE...
...AND GET OUT OF HERE.

DASH
HAA
HAA
HAA

WHAT'S THE MATTER, FORE-HALF?
TP
TP
!
HAA
HAA
HAA
DAD ...!
HAA
HAVE YOU SEEN DAD?!

DAD IS GONE!!
GRIP
WHY ARE YOU SO WORRIED? CALM DOWN. MAYBE HE'S IN THE BATHROOM OR SOMETHING.
NO. WHEN DAD GOES SOMEWHERE, HE ALWAYS TELLS ME WHERE HE'S GOING!
JUST SO I DON'T WORRY LIKE WHEN MY OLDER BROTHER LEFT...
SOB
SOB
HE ALWAYS TELLS ME SO I DON'T CRY!!
...HEY.
WHERE'S BALDY M'S PLACE?
...WHERE?
TAKE THIS PATH AND MAKE A RIGHT AT THE CROSS-ROAD...
THAT AT LEAST GAVE ME AN IDEA OF HOW TO SETTLE THIS...
MAN...
DID... HE...?

...
I'LL BRING DAD HOME, SO DON'T WORRY!!
STOP CRYING !!
RAA
ŌTA, MAKE SURE YOU LOOK AFTER UKI!
UKI, WAIT AT HOME!!
GOT IT?!
DASH

Wooooooo
TP

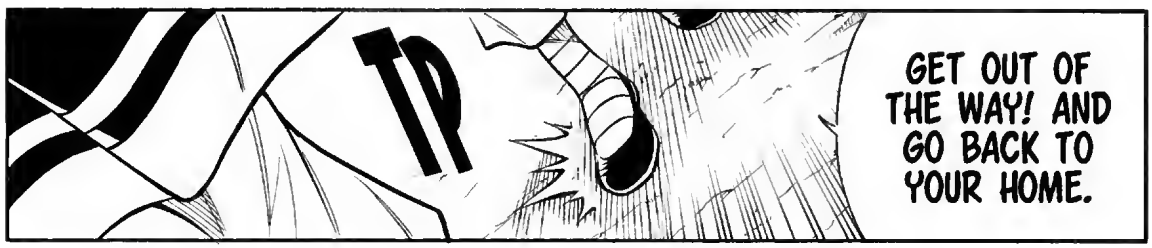
STOP RIGHT THERE !!
...YOU KNOW WHAT?
I AM GOING TO FACE THE FUDŌSAWA GANG.
WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING ...?!
HAA
HAA
THIS BATTLE DEPENDS ON WHO LAUNCHES THE FIRST BIG STRIKE.
WHOEVER STRIKES FIRST WILL ULTIMATELY WEAKEN THEIR OWN POSITION.
THAT IS WHY HE AND I WERE BOTH AT AN UNBEARABLE STANDSTILL.
BUT THEN YOU CAME AND DISRUPTED THE BALANCE OF THE STANDOFF.
THEY'RE PROBABLY ON THEIR WAY WITH A HUGE GROUP.

WHAT?
YOU'RE TOO NAIVE.
THEN IT WILL ALL GO IN OUR FAVOR. THEY WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO TAKE THE TOWN...
EVEN THE EX-ISHIN SHISHI UNCLE WILL BE UNABLE TO COVER UP A FIGHT THEY START THEMSELVES.
...TRUTH BECOMES LIES...
YOU DON'T REALIZE THE POWER THEY HAVE.
WHITE BECOMES BLACK...
...BECOMES EVIL.
...AND EVEN JUSTICE...
...

IS THAT RIGHT? BUT EITHER WAY, THEY WILL BE MAKING A STRIKE TONIGHT.
TP
RATHER THAN SIT AND WAIT...
...I'LL RAMPAGE UNTIL THE END.
...WHAT WILL YOU DO ABOUT UKI AND ŌTA?
WIN OR LOSE, YOU WILL BE IN JAIL.
I AM SURE OF IT AFTER TONIGHT.
TMP
TMP
THE PEOPLE OF THE TOWN WILL TAKE CARE OF THEM.
...MY FIRST BORN IS BACK AT HOME...
BESIDES ...
BUT IT'S WHERE YOU BELONG!
THAT PLACE IS NOT MY HOME.
HUH
IDIOT.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO PROTECT THEM, PROTECT THEM TO THE END !!
DON'T FIGHT WITHOUT PLANNING TO GO HOME, WHEN YOU HAVE A PLACE TO GO BACK TO!

THEN AFTER THAT, I'LL TAKE OVER.
"PROTECT AND FIGHT" UNTIL YOU BREAK!


TP
GET OUT OF THE WAY! AND GO BACK TO YOUR HOME.

I CAN'T STEP ASIDE, EVEN FOR MY SON!!
BUT THIS IS MY FIGHT!!
TM

...WE'LL RESUME THIS WHERE WE LEFT OFF YESTERDAY.
IF YOU WON'T MOVE...
CLENCH

HEH...
YOU SPEAK LIKE A GROWN MAN...

GAH?!
WHAT ...
Y... YOU...
...WERE HOLDING BACK... YESTER-DAY...
SHA
I'M NOT SO UNGRATEFUL THAT I WOULD HIT MY DAD WITHOUT HOLDING BACK...
FWUMP

THE "POWER OF JUSTICE" OF THE ISHIN SHISHI...
THEY AREN'T YOUR ENEMY... THEY ARE MINE, FROM TEN YEARS AGO...
TP
DAD, I'M BUYING YOUR FIGHT!
THE ENEMY OF THE ONE WHO BEARS THE "CHARACTER OF EVIL" ON HIS BACK!!
悪

Rurouni Kenshin

Act 233—A Man's Back 6: Cry of the Mountain

Act 233
A Man's Back 6: Cry of the Mountain
忠
伸宏 知月

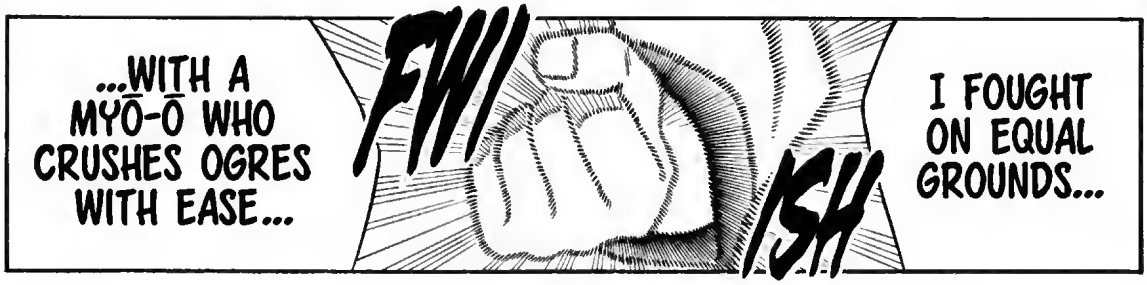
YO.
GLARE
...WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
IT'S TOO LATE FOR APOLOGIES.
NO.
I JUST NOW FINISHED THE FIGHT I BOUGHT.
THAT STUBBORN OLD MAN HIGASHIDANI IS SLEEPING DOWN THE ROAD.
HOW-EVER.
IT WAS OVER IN A SIMPLE PUNCH, JUST LIKE THAT.

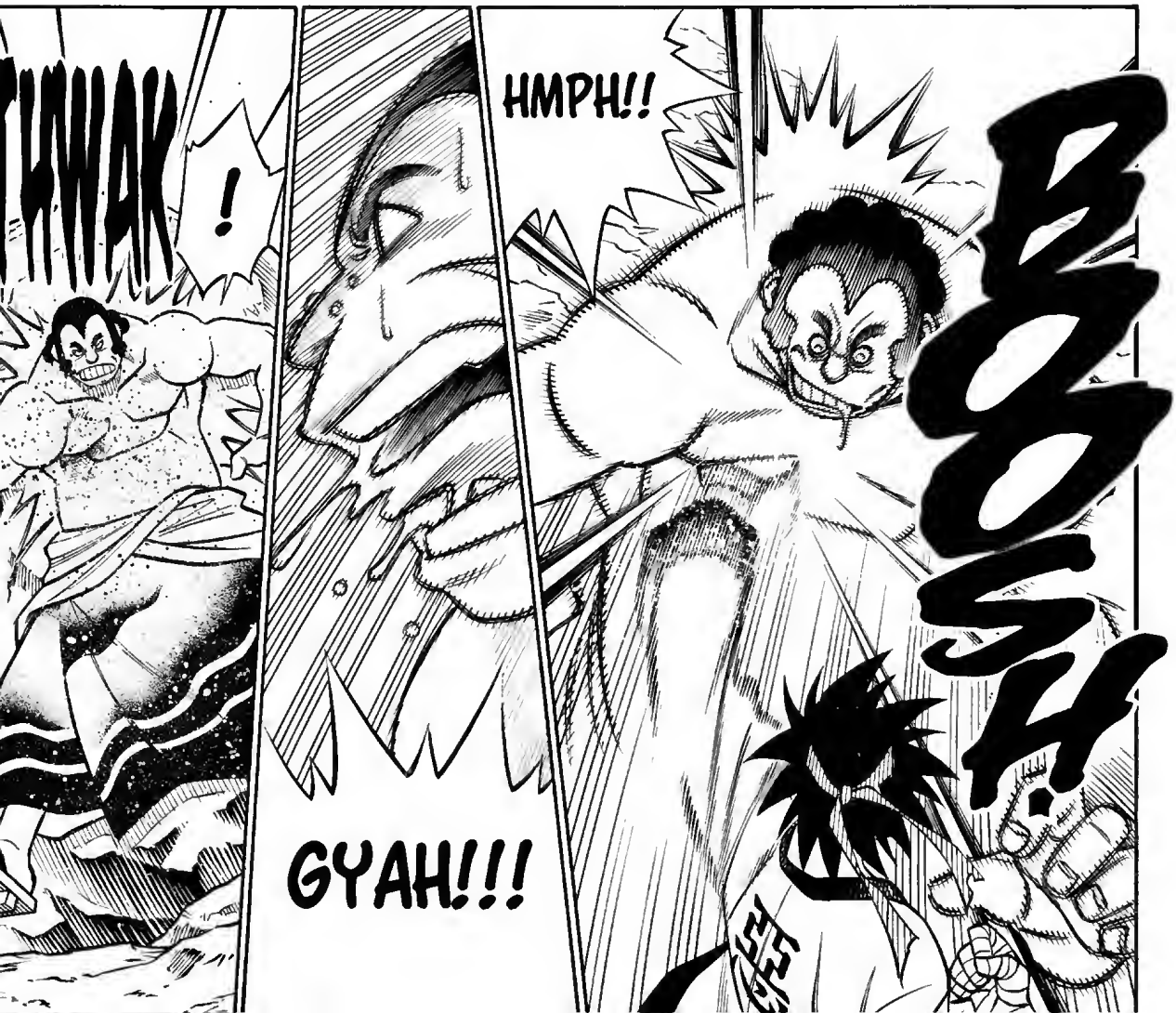
IT WASN'T WHAT I WAS PROM-ISED.
HEH
IT DIDN'T RELIEVE ANY STRESS AT ALL.
HUH ?!
WHAT'S YOUR POINT!!
HOLD IT!
SHWIP
IS THAT RIGHT?
I MUST APOLO-GIZE.
SHWUP
WHY DON'T I SERVE AS YOUR OPPONENT ?!
SWAAAAK

"OGRE CRUSH"!
IT'S A SLAP THAT CRUSHED MANY A WRESTLER'S FACE!!
OOOOOH
THERE! IT'S THE BOSS'S SPECIALTY!
HEH
TO LIVEN UP THE CROWD TONIGHT...
...WE'LL START BY TURNING YOU INTO A BLOODY PULP!
SO YOU'RE A FAILED WRESTLER.
NO WONDER YOU'RE SO FAT.
GRUUUUUU
BARK ALL YOU WANT!
EAT THIS!

OGRE CRUSH !!
SHAAA

OGRE CRUSH?
IT'S USELESS.
WHAT?
WHAT'S THIS?
YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD KILL THINGS WITH THIS?


...WITH A MYŌ-Ō WHO CRUSHES OGRES WITH EASE...
FWI
ISH
I FOUGHT ON EQUAL GROUNDS...


THWAK
!
GYAH!!!
HMPH!!
BOSH

OR DID YOU WANT TO PLAY HIDE AND SEEK?
DO YOU WANT TO GET TO IT?
TP
...WHO... THE HECK IS THIS GUY...?
HAA
HAA
HUH?!
SHIF
FWAK

WHICH MEANS...
FLEX
...AND DESTROYS IT WITH TWO SIMULTANEOUS HITS.
THE SKILL I LEARNED FROM THE MYŌ-Ō NEGATES THE RESISTANCE OF AN OBJECT...
CLENCH
THAT REMINDS ME...
WHAT...?
THUNK

KABOOM
GAH...
I SEE...
IT'S NOT AS POWERFUL AS THE ORIGINAL, BUT IT'S RATHER GOOD FOR AN IMPROVISATION...
IT USES BOTH HANDS, SO I CAN'T MANAGE A REPETITION OF BLOWS. BUT IT'S BETTER THAN NOTHING.

THAT'S ONLY THREE BLOWS, TOTAL...
NOT EVEN CLOSE TO ENOUGH FOR STRESS RELIEF...
CRIK CRAK
THE BOULDER IS GONE?!
YAMMER
WHAT WAS THAT?
BOSS!
...FOOL!!
GRR
STUPID...
DOOM
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN WIN AGAINST 200 MEN ?!

ZZZ
...DAD...
SHU
GRIP
TPTPTP
HAA
TRMP
TRMP
TRMP
TRMP
HAA
HAA
TRMP
TRMP
TRMP
TRMP
HAA
HAA
DASH
!

!
RAAH
RAAH
RAAH
RAAH
RAAH
RAAH
WHAT'S THIS?
WHAT'S THIS NOISE ...?
RAAH
RAAH
RAAH
RAAH
IT'S COMING FROM THE MOUNTAIN.
RAAH
RAAH
RAAH
RUM-BLING?
HOWLING ?
OR SOMETHING ELSE...?

RRAAAAA
RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH

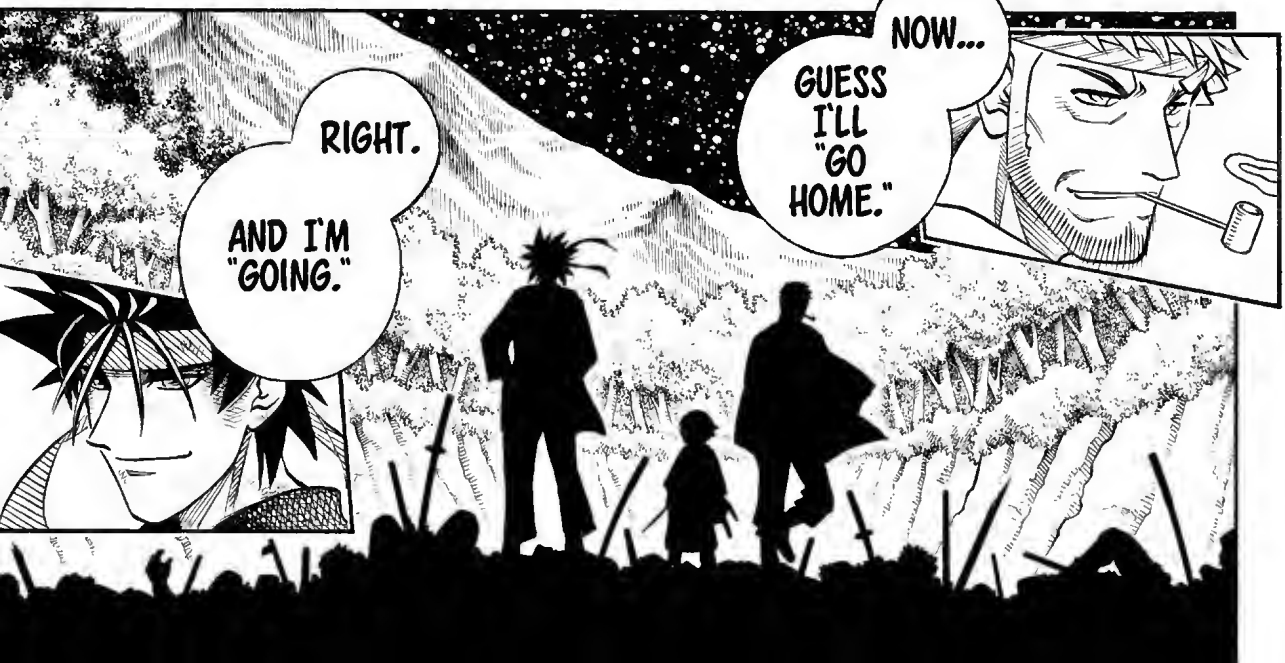
RAAH!

...CAME TO FIGHT, TOO.
PAT
...I SEE. YOU...
A MAN'S GOTTA DO WHAT A MAN'S GOTTA DO...
EVEN THOUGH UKI PROTECTS YOU ALL THE TIME, YOU'RE STILL A MAN.
HAVE TO MAKE IT IN TIME!!
HAA
MAKE IT!
HAA
DASH DASH DASH DASH DASH DASH DASH DASH DASH DASH DASH DA
HAA
HUH?
HAA
DASH
DASH
WE HAVE TO HURRY OR THAT IDIOT WILL GET KILLED!
OH—
LET'S GO, OTA!
TMP

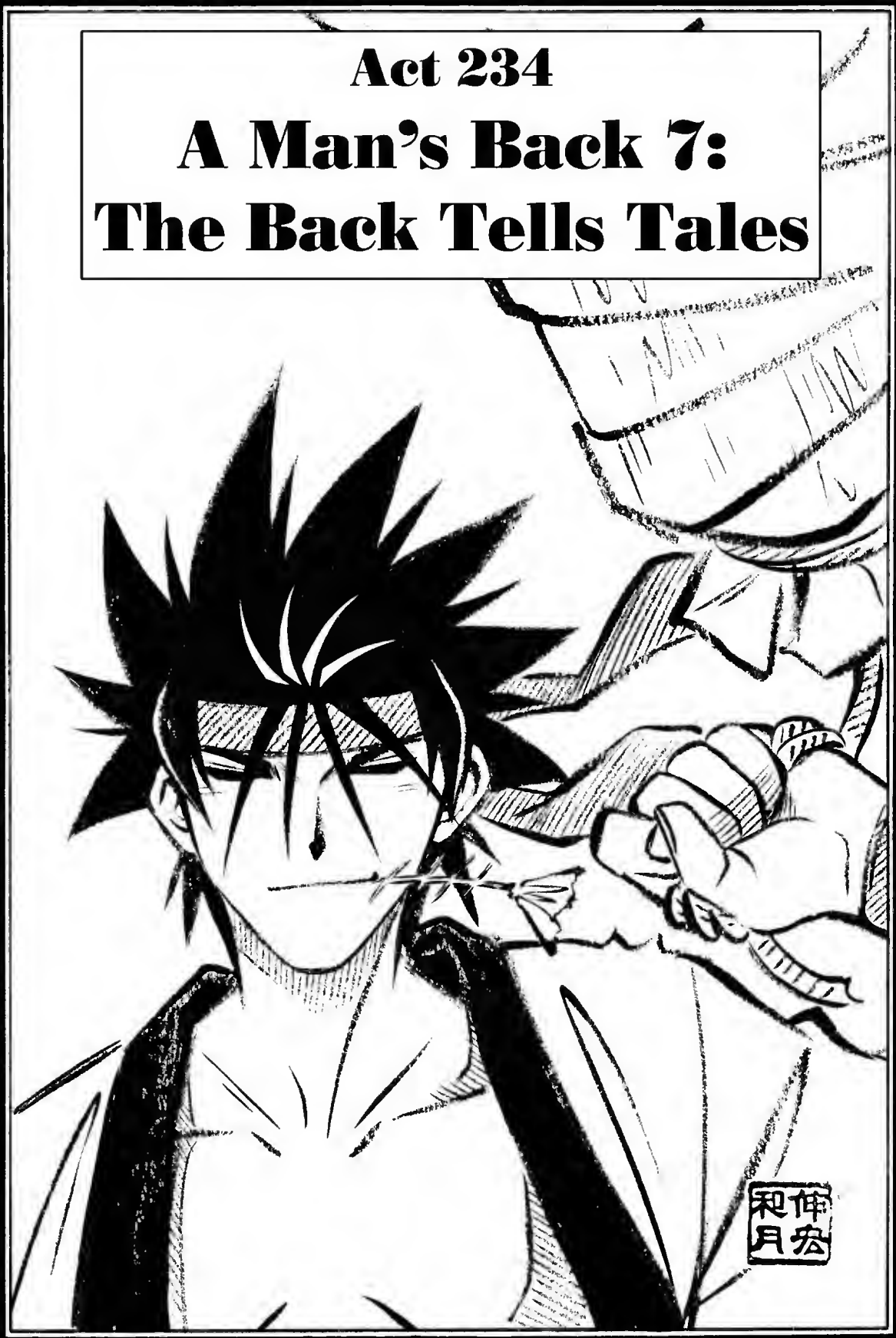
I FINALLY FEEL A LITTLE BETTER.
URK
A LITTLE RAMPAGING IS ALWAYS BEST FOR RELIEVING STRESS!
GRIN
PHEW.

Rurouni Kenshin

Act 234—A Man's Back 7: The Back Tells Tales



Act 234
A Man's Back 7: The Back Tells Tales



IS HE SLEEPING?
YEAH. HE'S USUALLY IN HIS FUTON BY THIS TIME OF NIGHT.
HE CAME OUT TO FIGHT HOWEVER HE COULD.

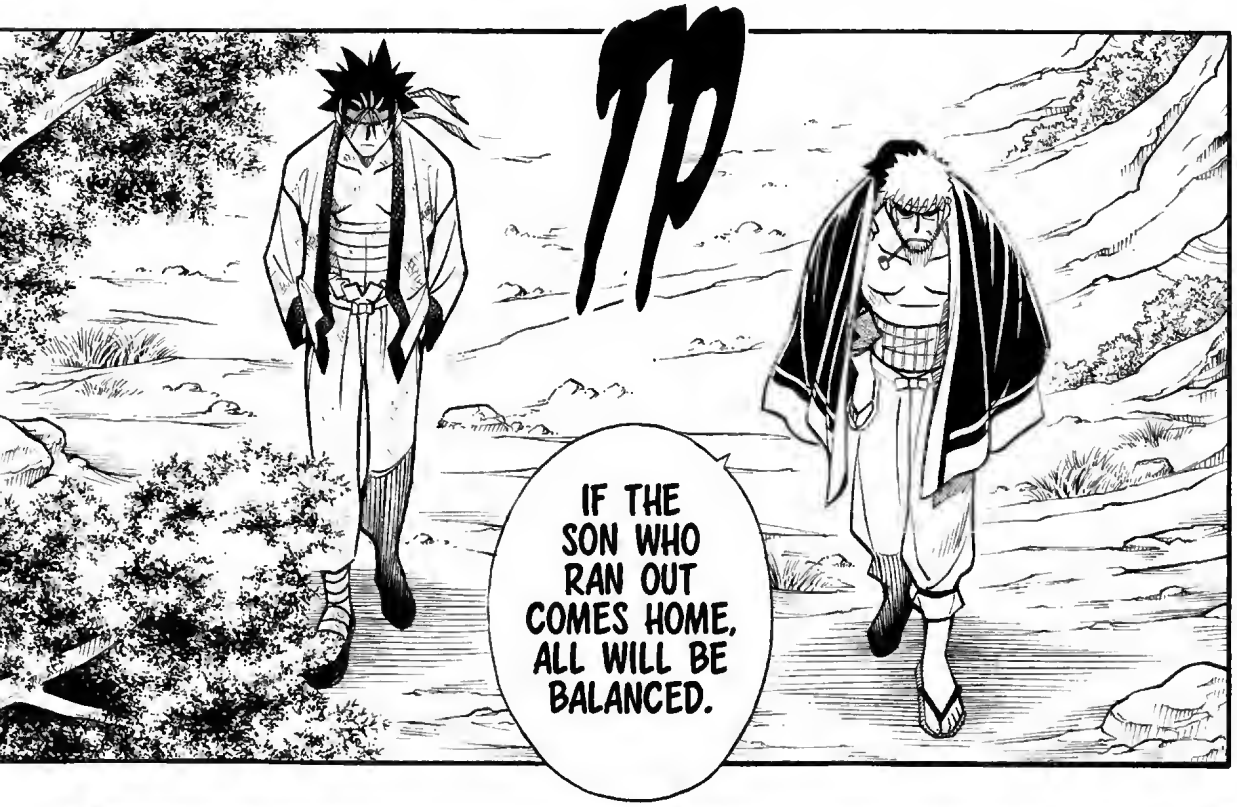
HE MUST HAVE TIRED HIMSELF OUT...
ZZZ...

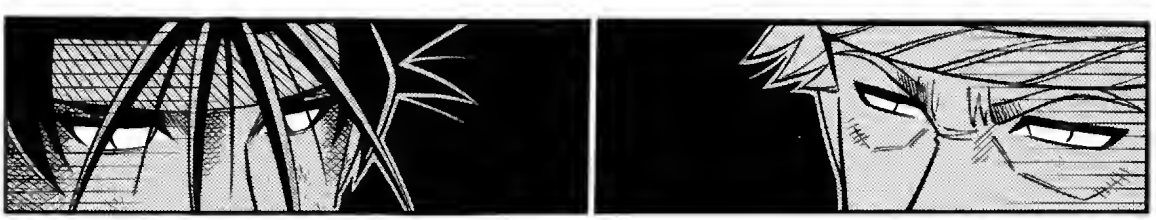
...THAT HE IS LIKE THIS?
IT'S BECAUSE OF UKI...
HE'LL FIGHT WHEN HE NEEDS TO, AND HE WANTS TO BECOME STRONGER.
HE MAY APPEAR WEAK, BUT HE'S A HIGASHI-DANI.

I THOUGHT SO...
ACTUALLY, IT'S YOUR FAULT.
EVEN AN IDIOT LIKE YOU COULD PROBABLY IMAGINE.
SHE WAS USED TO FOLLOWING YOU AROUND, AND THE AMOUNT OF CRYING SHE DID...
THE REASON UKI BECAME SUCH A PROTECTIVE WORRYWART WAS BECAUSE YOU RAN AWAY FROM HOME—
...AND WHEN SHE HEARD THE SEKIHŌ ARMY DISBANDED, SHE CRIED...
WHEN WE HEARD NEWS YOU JOINED THE SEKIHŌ ARMY, SHE CRIED, SAYING SHE WANTED TO JOIN TOO...
YES.
NANAME WAS YOUR MOM. DO YOU REMEMBER?
...BUT WHEN NANAME PASSED AWAY, IT PUSHED HER OVER THE EDGE.
I THOUGHT SHE CALMED DOWN A LITTLE WHEN ŌTA WAS BORN...

DO YOU SEE DAD?! I CAN'T FIND DAD!!
...UKI BECAME AFRAID OF LOSING FAMILY MEMBERS...
MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE...

IF WE CARE FOR ŌTA, UKI NEEDS TO STAND DOWN.
IF WE CARE FOR UKI, ŌTA NEEDS TO STAND DOWN.
ŌTA KNOWS THIS, AND PLAYS HIS PART...


TP
IF THE SON WHO RAN OUT COMES HOME, ALL WILL BE BALANCED.



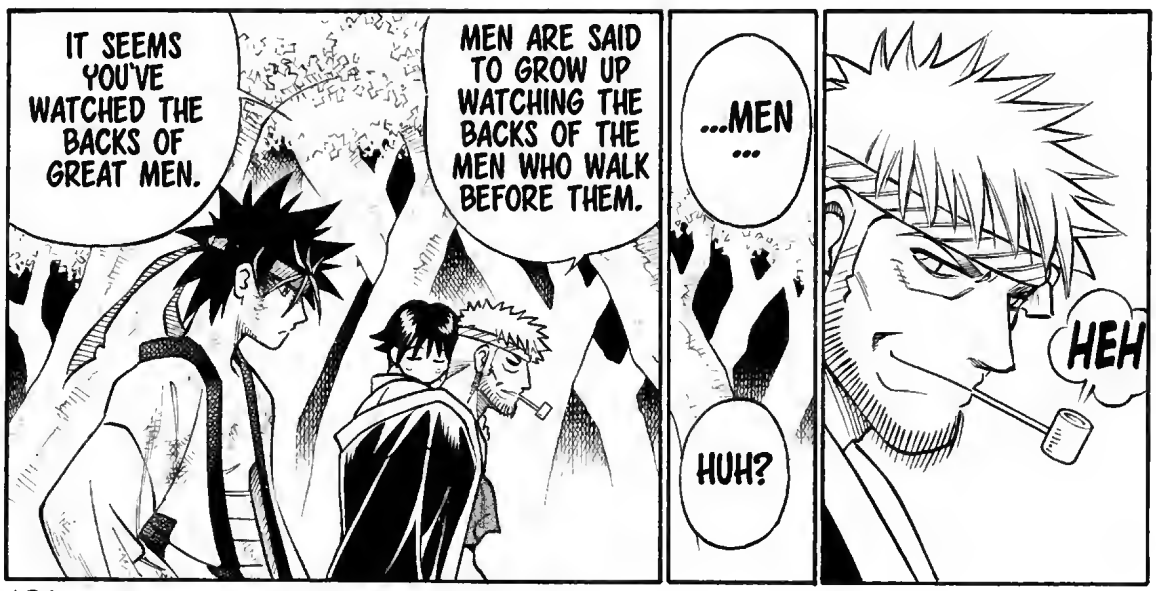
GYAA HAHA HAHA !!

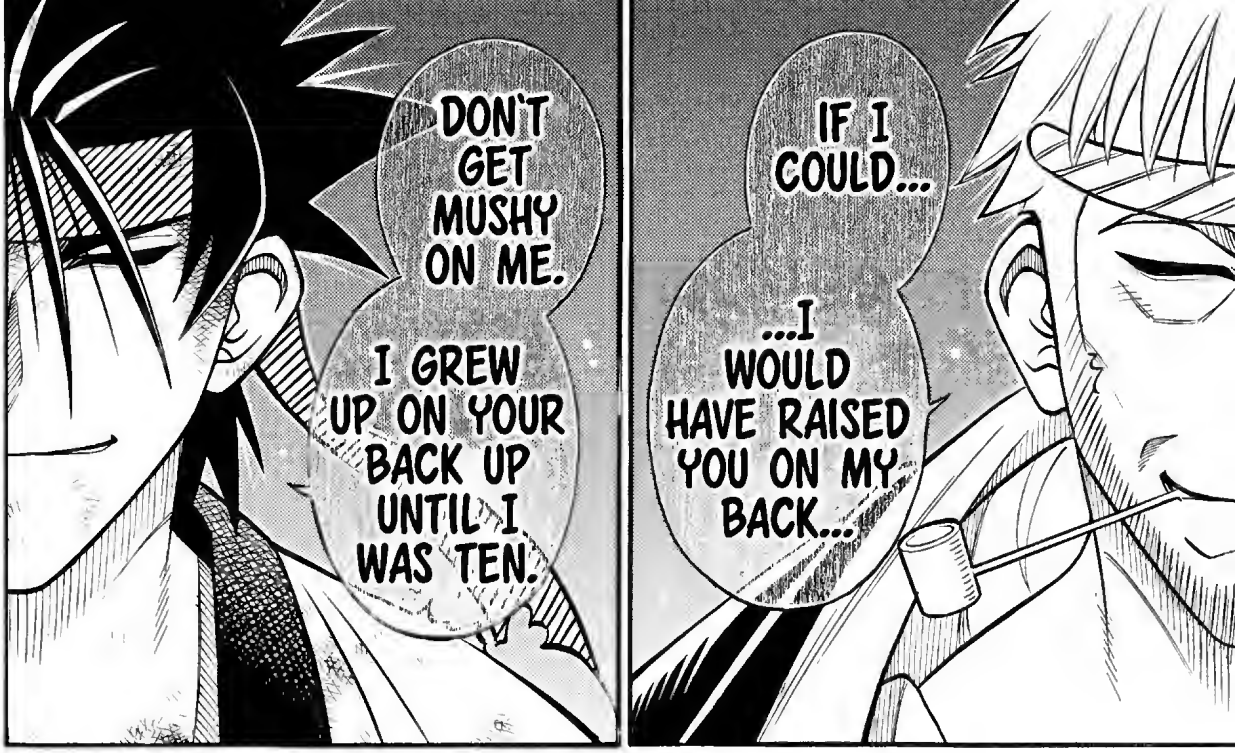
YEAH, PRETTY CRAZY.
ZZZ
THAT'S CRAZY TALK.

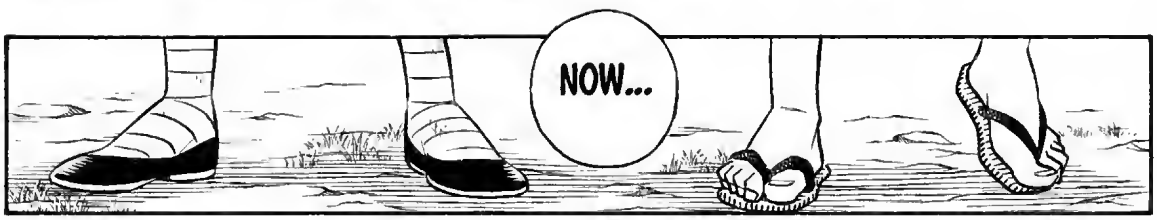
I'LL TAKE CARE OF UKI AND ŌTA UNTIL THEY'RE GROWN.
YOU GO AHEAD AND HEAD OFF TO WHEREVER.

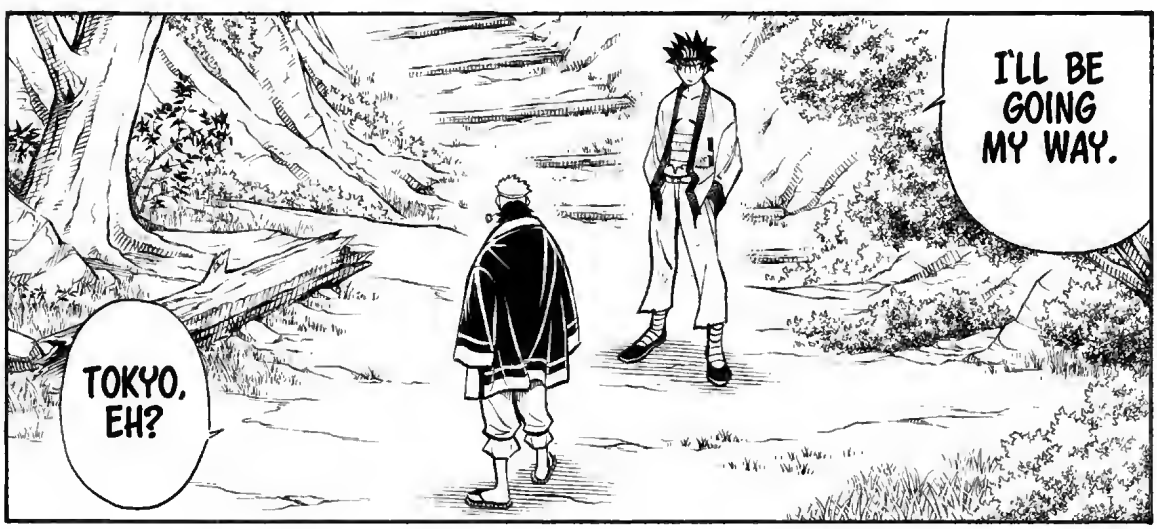
I HAVE NO NEED FOR A HOME, OR ANYONE TO PROTECT.
YUP, I'LL HEAD ON OUT.

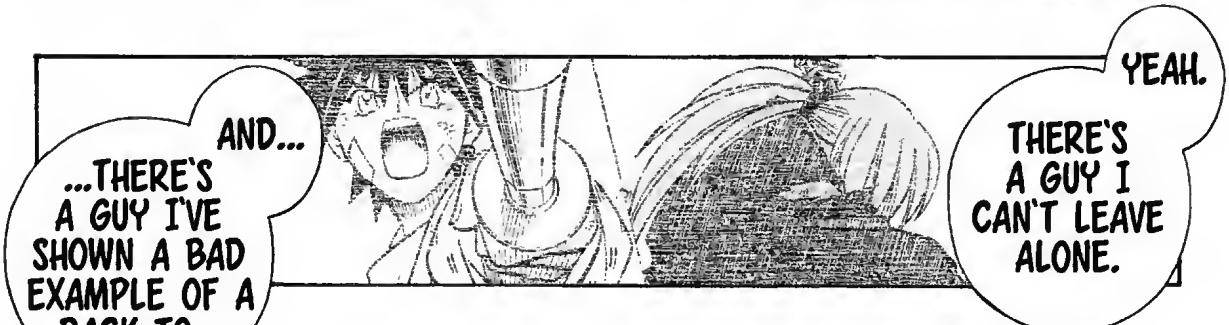
IF I HAVE THIS, I DON'T NEED ANYTHING ELSE.
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF MY OPPONENT IS POWER OR VIOLENCE.
I'LL FIGHT THEM, BEARING THIS ON MY BACK.
SO THOSE WHO RISK THEIR LIVES TO MAKE THEIR IDEALS A REALITY...
...OR THOSE WHO TRY TO PROTECT SOMEONE WITH THEIR LIVES...
...CAN FIGHT TO THEIR HEART'S CONTENT.


HEH
...MEN ...
HUH?
MEN ARE SAID TO GROW UP WATCHING THE BACKS OF THE MEN WHO WALK BEFORE THEM.
IT SEEMS YOU'VE WATCHED THE BACKS OF GREAT MEN.


DON'T GET MUSHY ON ME.
I GREW UP ON YOUR BACK UP UNTIL I WAS TEN.
IF I COULD...
...I WOULD HAVE RAISED YOU ON MY BACK...

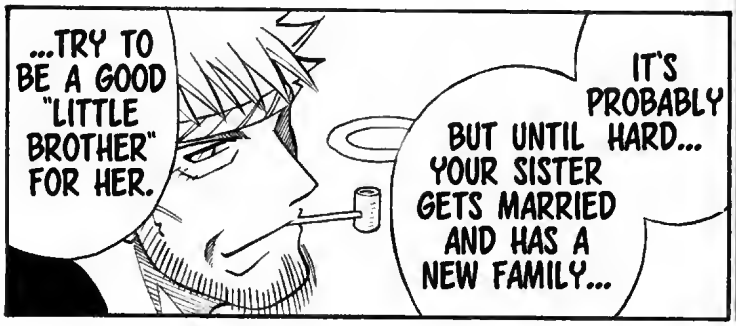

NOW...


I'LL BE GOING MY WAY.
TOKYO, EH?


AND... ...THERE'S A GUY I'VE SHOWN A BAD EXAMPLE OF A BACK TO...
YEAH. THERE'S A GUY I CAN'T LEAVE ALONE.

I'M GLAD TO SEE THAT YOU ARE A MAN WHO CAN ACT WHEN HE NEEDS TO.
I'M SORRY I SAID SOME CRUEL THINGS THE OTHER DAY.

HEY, APPLE CHEEKS.
WAKE UP.
TUG
TUG


...TRY TO BE A GOOD "LITTLE BROTHER" FOR HER.
IT'S PROBABLY HARD... BUT UNTIL YOUR SISTER GETS MARRIED AND HAS A NEW FAMILY...

TAKE CARE.
KNOCK ON THE DOORS OF A KENJUTSU DOJO CALLED KAMIYA KASSHIN-RYŪ.
ONCE THAT HAPPENS, COME OUT TO TOKYO.
THERE YOU CAN BECOME STRONGER.

...
NOW, LET'S GET ON HOME...
...SO UKI DOESN'T WORRY.
TP.
...OKAY.

SHOOT.
!
I ALMOST FORGOT.
I HAVE TO DO ONE MORE THING BEFORE I LEAVE.

THIS SHOULD SETTLE EVERY-THING...
SHLURP
WELL ...
...WE'VE MADE THE FIRST MOVE.
HMM.
I DIDN'T THINK A MAN INVOLVED WITH BATTŌSAI WOULD BE HERE?
?!
GYAH !
URG!
FWAK
THWAK
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
FWISH
WH... WHAT IS IT?!

YO.
SHUUU
HUHH
WHAT HAPPENED, HIRUMA?!
GUARDS ?
STUCK IN THIS ROLE TO THE END...

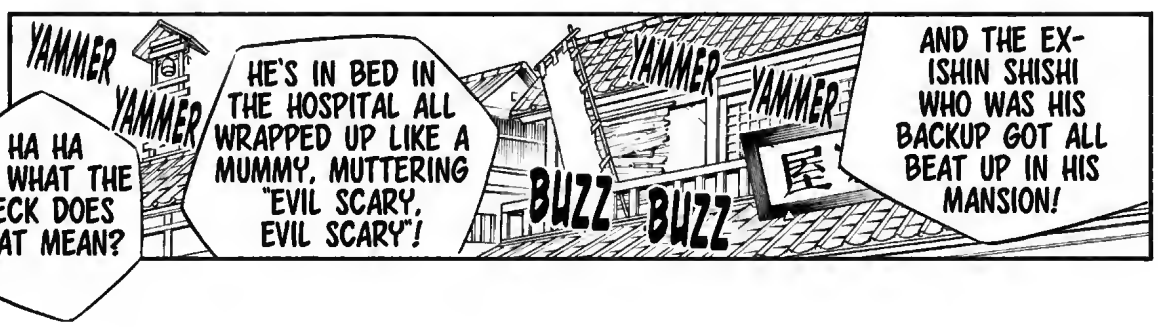
YOU MUST BE BORED, DRINKING ALONE.
HEH
I CAME OVER TO PLAY.
AAAAAAAAAHH

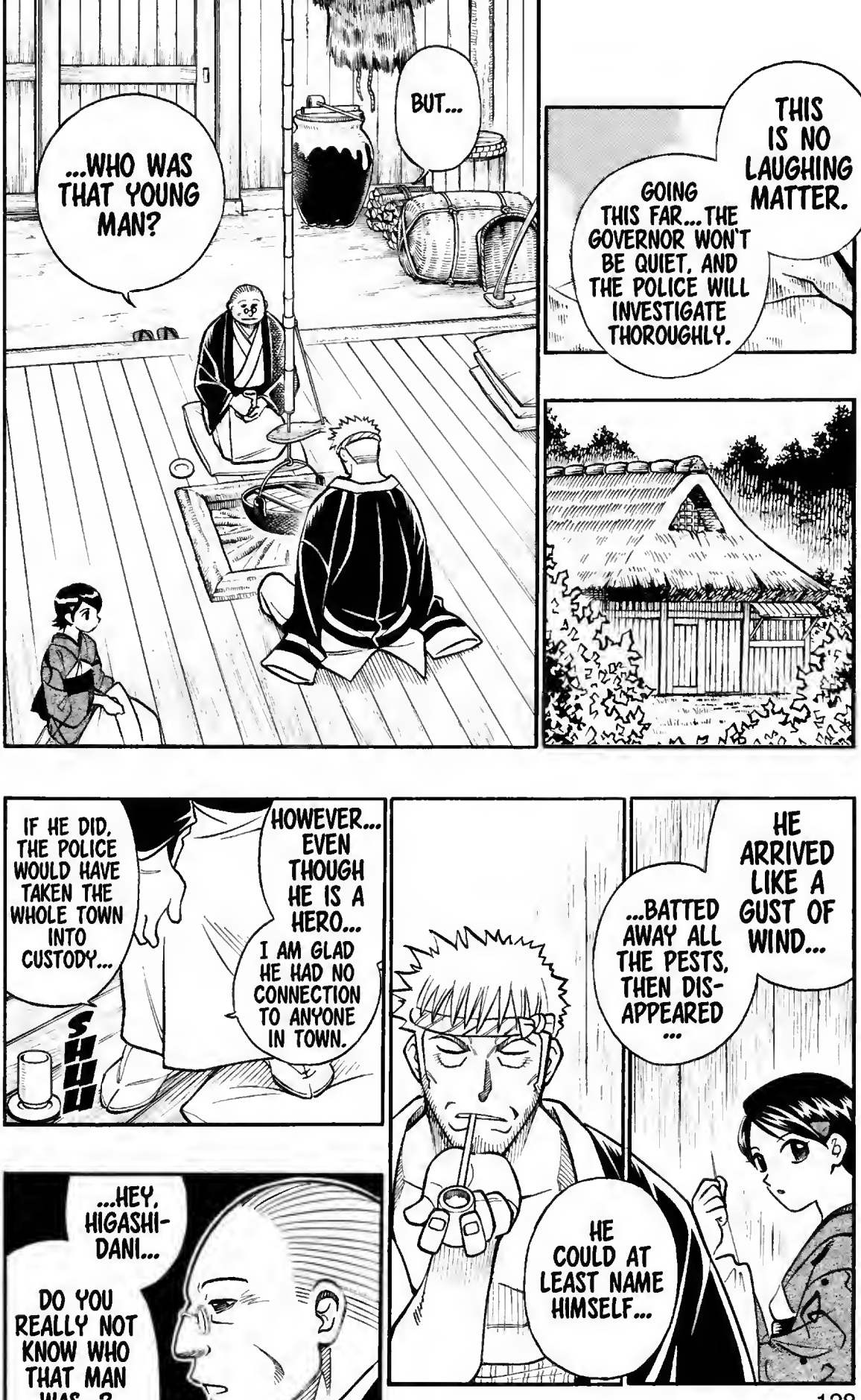
THE NEXT DAY
HEY, DID YOU HEAR?!
YEAH, ABOUT THAT GUY, RIGHT?!

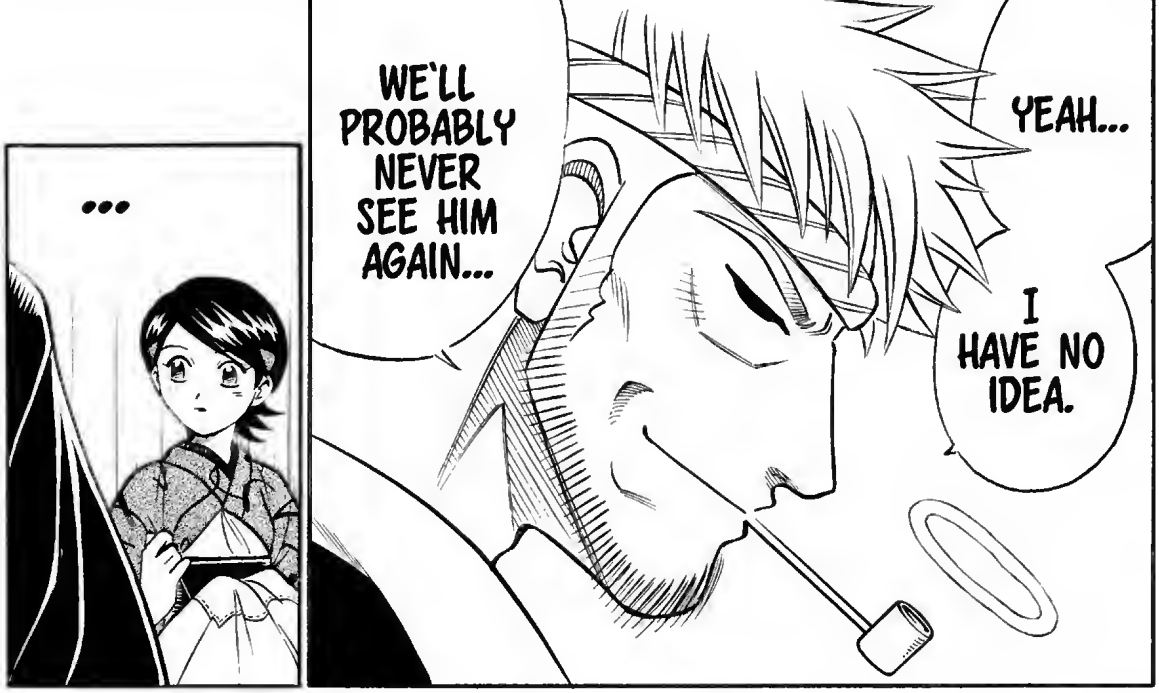
HE CRUSHED A BOULDER WITH HIS BARE HANDS!
YAMMER
YAMMER
NO WAY, SERIOUSLY?
BUZZ
BUZZ

REALLY?
YAMMER
YAMMER
HE BEAT 200 OF FUDŌSAWA'S MEN, SINGLE-HANDED!

YAMMER
YAMMER
HEH, HE DESERVED IT!
FUDŌSAWA HIMSELF HAD SIX BROKEN RIBS!


YAMMER
YAMMER
HA HA HA, WHAT THE HECK DOES THAT MEAN?
HE'S IN BED IN THE HOSPITAL ALL WRAPPED UP LIKE A MUMMY, MUTTERING "EVIL SCARY, EVIL SCARY"!
YAMMER
YAMMER
BUZZ
BUZZ
AND THE EX-ISHIN SHISHI WHO WAS HIS BACKUP GOT ALL BEAT UP IN HIS MANSION!


...WHO WAS THAT YOUNG MAN?
BUT...
THIS IS NO LAUGHING MATTER.
GOING THIS FAR...THE GOVERNOR WON'T BE QUIET, AND THE POLICE WILL INVESTIGATE THOROUGHLY.
IF HE DID, THE POLICE WOULD HAVE TAKEN THE WHOLE TOWN INTO CUSTODY...
SHUU
HOWEVER... EVEN THOUGH HE IS A HERO...
I AM GLAD HE HAD NO CONNECTION TO ANYONE IN TOWN.
HE ARRIVED LIKE A GUST OF WIND...
...BATTED AWAY ALL THE PESTS, THEN DIS-APPEARED ...
HE COULD AT LEAST NAME HIMSELF...
...HEY, HIGASHI-DANI...
DO YOU REALLY NOT KNOW WHO THAT MAN WAS...?


...
WE'LL PROBABLY NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN...
YEAH...
I HAVE NO IDEA.

ŌTA, MAKE SURE YOU LOOK AFTER UKI!
UKI, YOU STAY AND WAIT AT HOME!!

...SO DON'T WORRY!!
I'LL BRING DAD HOME...

NO... WAY...
OKAY. IT'S DONE, ŌTA.
AAH
COULD IT BE...
...MY BROTHER, SANOSUKE...
MUTTER

DASH DASH
WHATEVER THE CASE...
...THAT YOUNG MAN WILL BE TALKED OF IN THIS TOWN FOR A LONG TIME...
HE'S SO HAPPY ABOUT IT...
DOES HE KNOW WHAT THAT CHARACTER MEANS...?
HE KNOWS!
YEAH.

TIME FOR A RUN TO TOKYO!!
NOW...
TMP
ALONG WITH SANO-SUKE...
...THE STORY RETURNS TO TOKYO!
小国診療所
OGUNI CLINIC

The Secret Life of Characters (50)

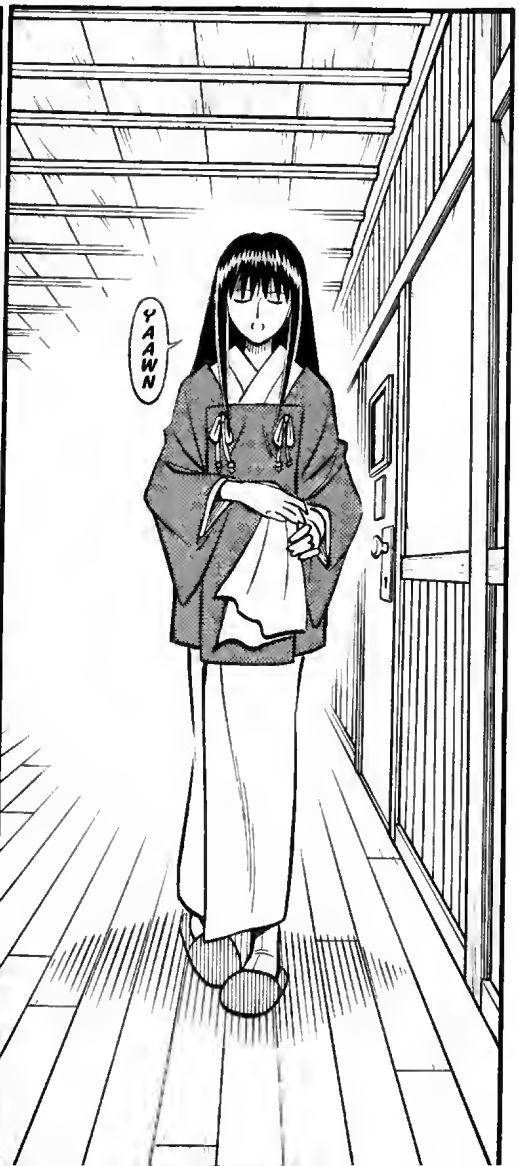
—Higashidani Family—

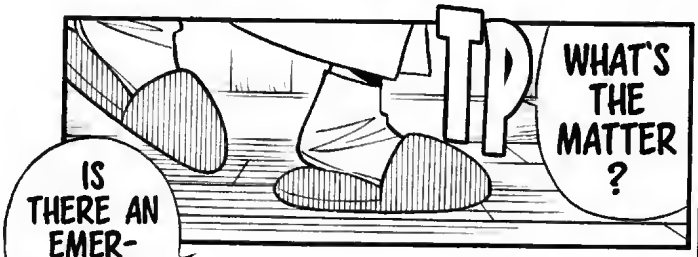
I've always had an idea of what Sanosuke's family might be like, and the Higashidani family is formed along those lines. The father, Kamishimoemon, is just what Sanosuke will be like when he's older. The sister, Uki, is a very lively person and very protective. The youngest brother, Ōta, is the exact opposite of Sanosuke, a weak little boy. These basic characteristics, with some storyline added, turned them into what they are now. But to be honest, this story is a little unsatisfactory. Under the keywords of "a man's back," Sanosuke was supposed to return to his origin, realize his life was on a different path from Kenshin's, and continue on his own way. However, I struggled a lot with the storyline for Kenshin before this, using up my energy, and wasn't able to concentrate on this storyline. The story had a lot of unnecessary parts inclined, and lost its focus on Sanosuke. The plan for four episodes turned into seven. When I think back, I should have concentrated on either Uki or Ōta, made it a three person family, and not been caught up on the four person family.

But the Higashidani family was fun to illustrate, so it's fine. A family is something I'd like to keep challenging myself with, so I'll hone my skills and take another shot at it.

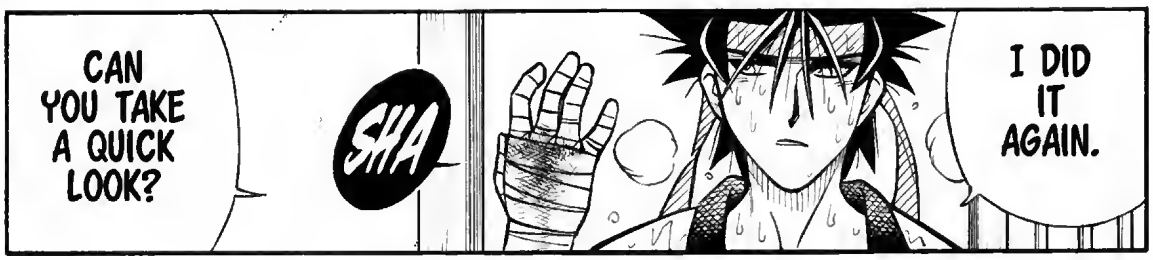
There are no real models in terms of design. Kamishimoemon was refined from an aged Sanosuke that appeared in one of the ideas for the final episode for ***Ruro-Ken***. Uki is just a modern, easy to draw type. But she also comes from the idea that Sanosuke's sister must have pointy hair, which made me add the pointy hair at the back. Ōta is a typical Watsuki image of a weak, country boy, with the circle marks on the cheeks. Overall, I was aiming for a design that wouldn't take long to draw out, but this was rather difficult. Things gradually changed as I kept drawing them, but I ended up feeling like I needed to go out and look at real people and learn a bit more. Building a design out of elements taken from pictures and images seems to have its limits.

Act 235—White as the Snow Seen That Day

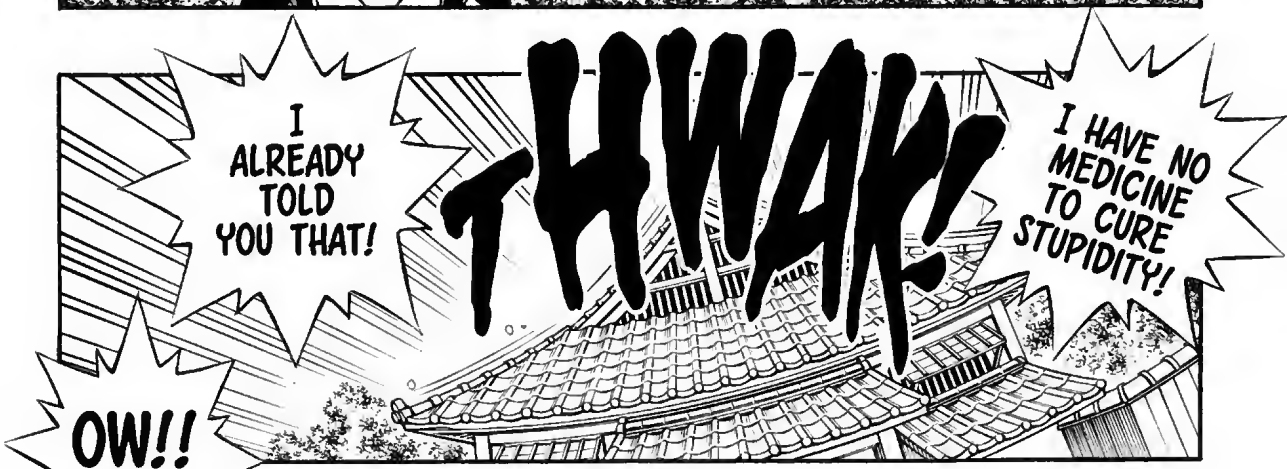


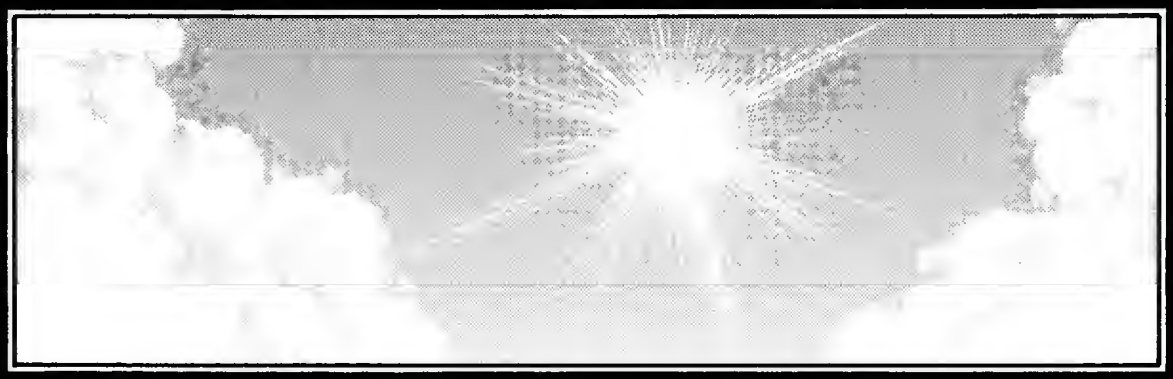


HELLO.
HUFF
PANT
WHEEZE


I DID IT AGAIN.
SHA
CAN YOU TAKE A QUICK LOOK?

GRR
GRR

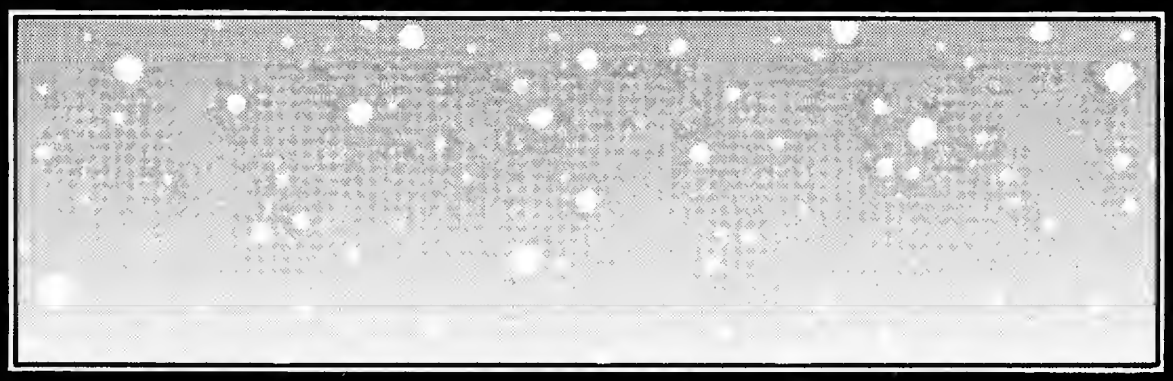

I HAVE NO MEDICINE TO CURE STUPIDITY!
THWAK!
I ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT!
OW!!



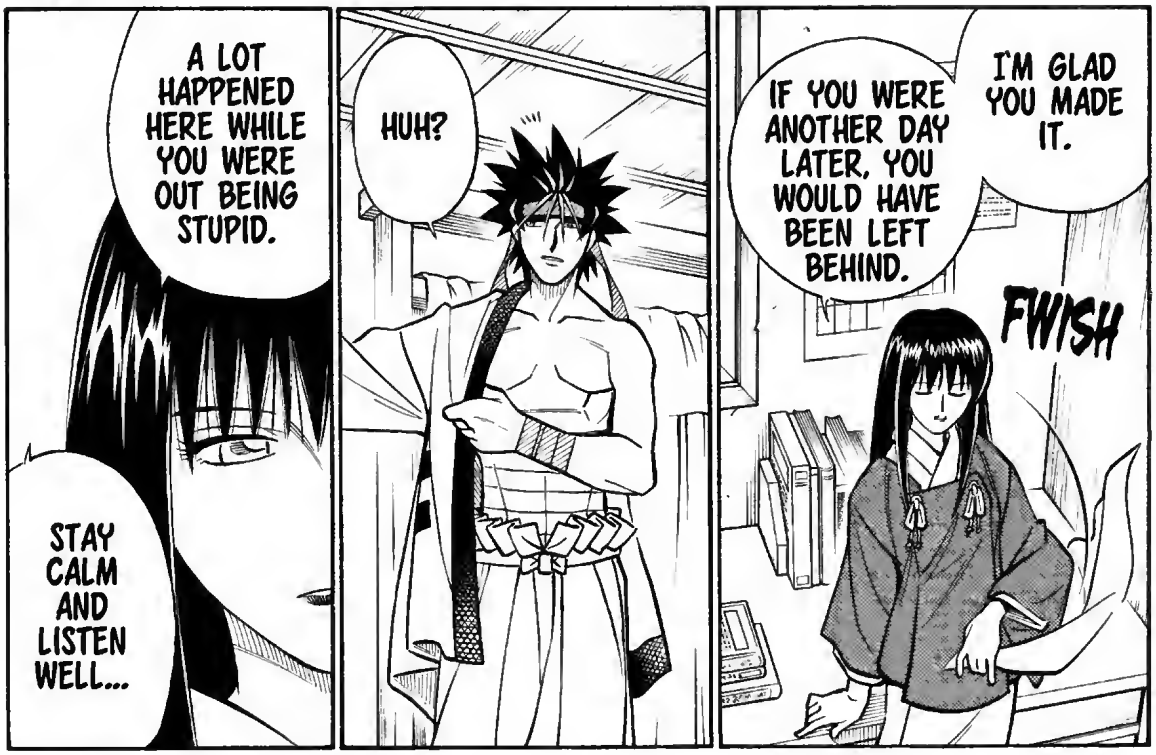
Act 235

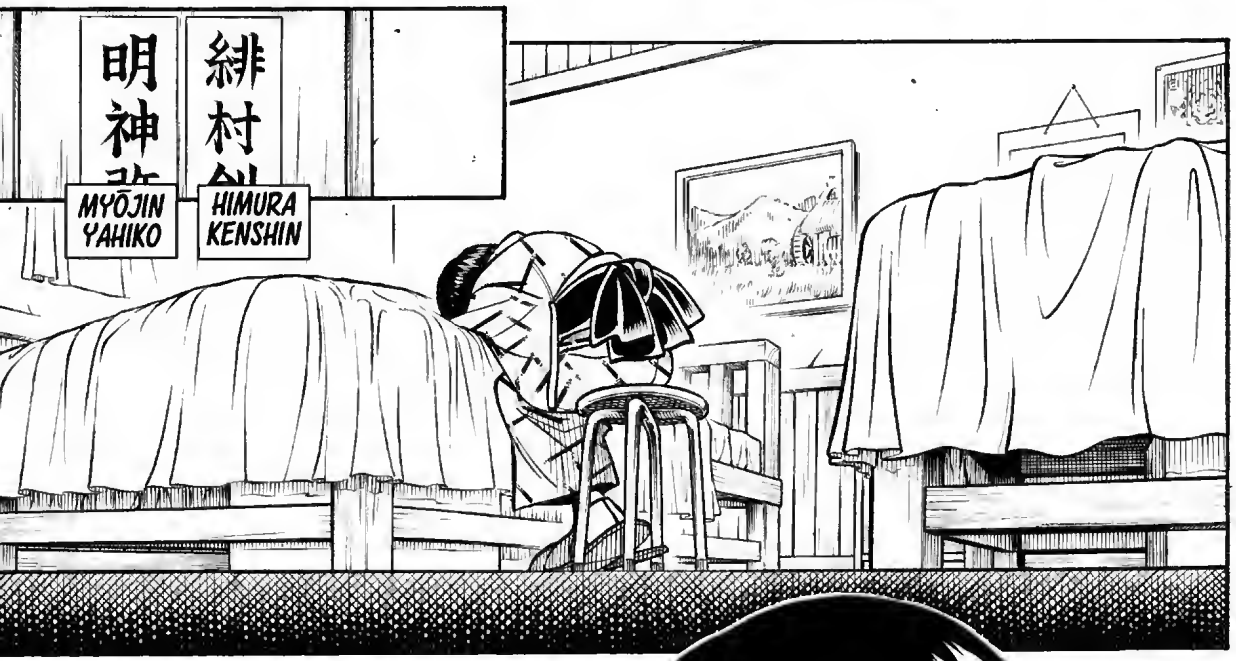
White as the Snow Seen That Day

伸宏 和月



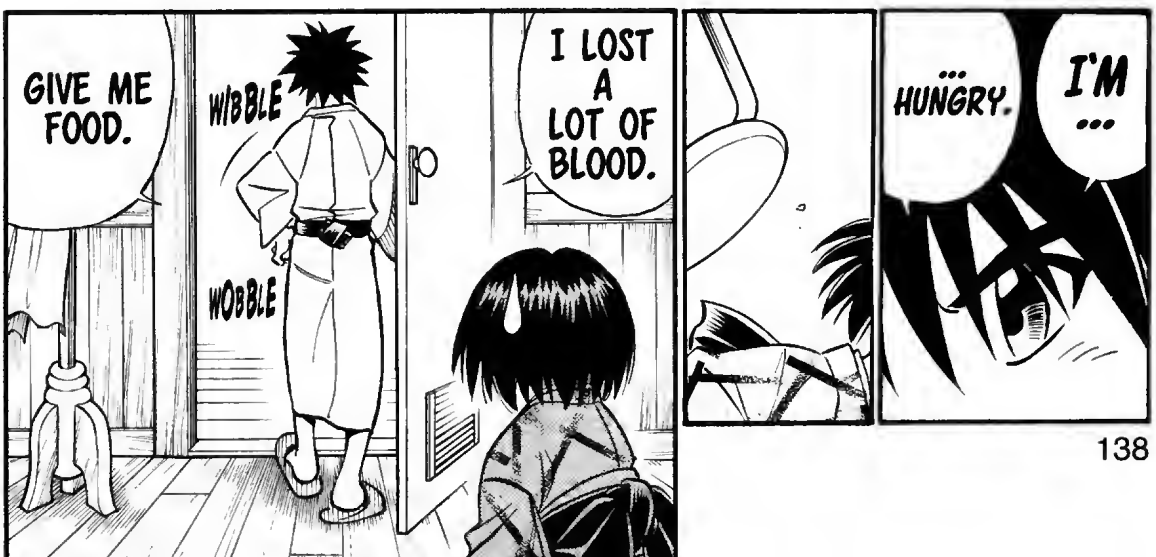
CAST: "DON'T USE"

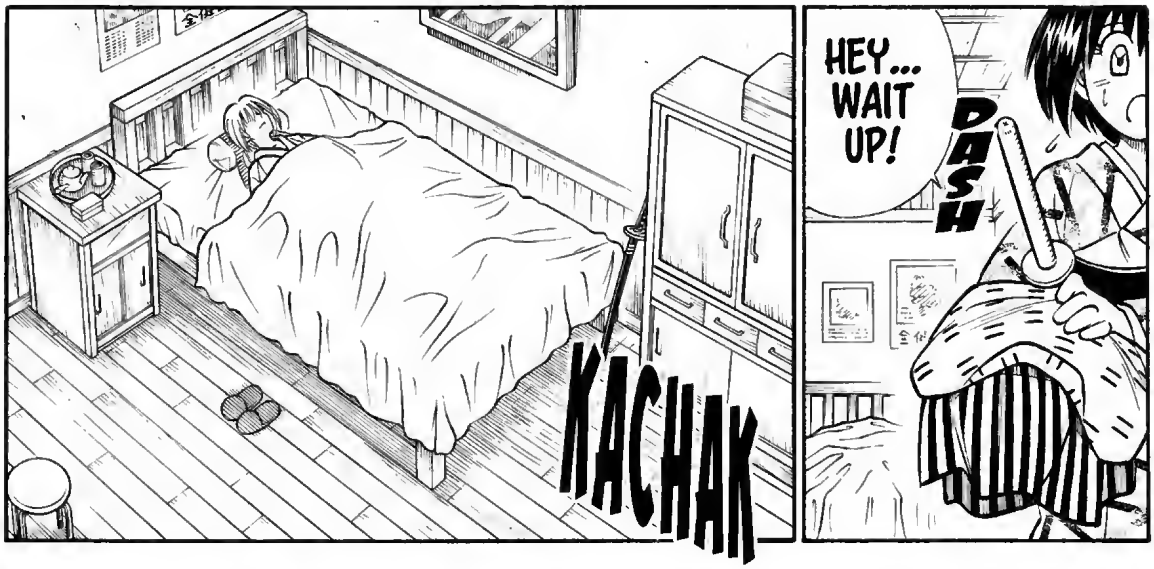

A LOT HAPPENED HERE WHILE YOU WERE OUT BEING STUPID.
STAY CALM AND LISTEN WELL...
HUH?
IF YOU WERE ANOTHER DAY LATER, YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN LEFT BEHIND.
I'M GLAD YOU MADE IT.
FWISH

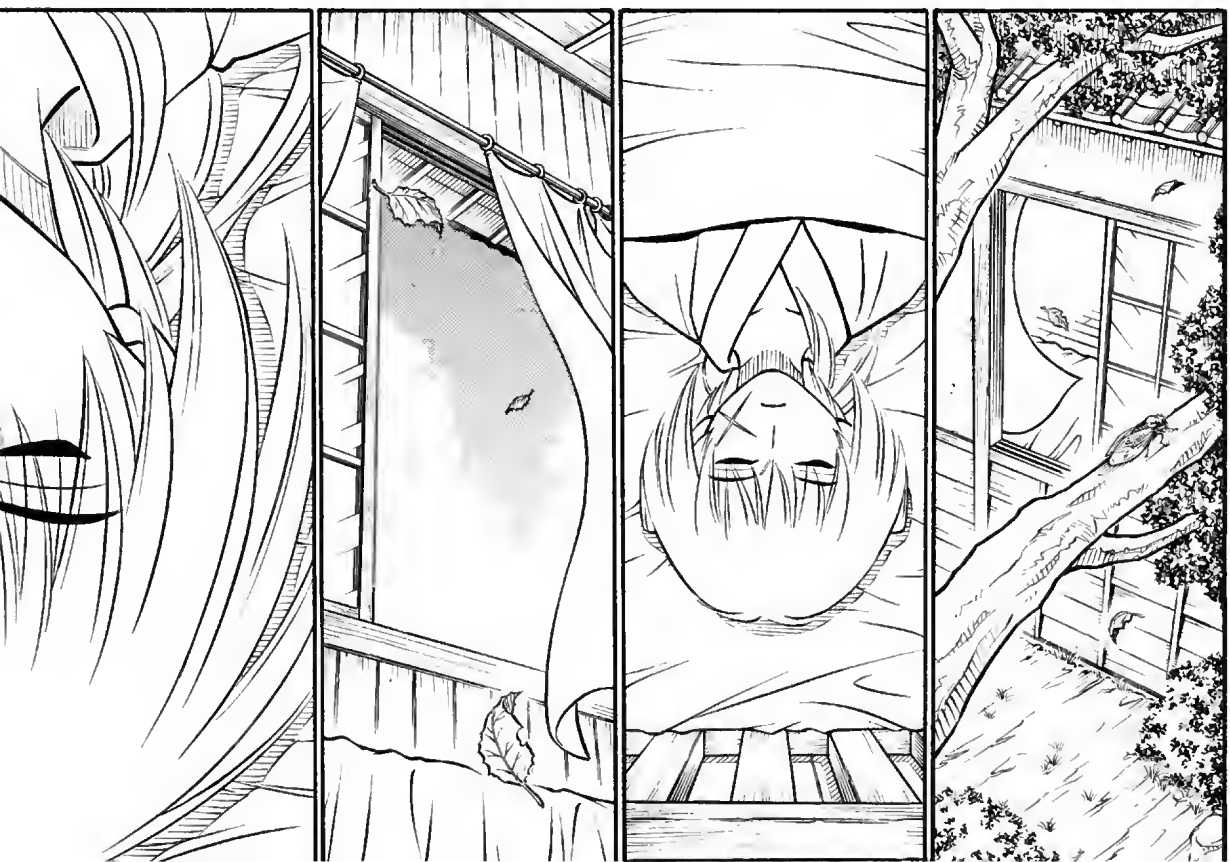

明神弥彦
MYŌJIN YAHIKO
緋村剣心
HIMURA KENSHIN

SHUP
UNN...

YA—
YAHIKO-KUN.


I'M...
...HUNGRY.
I LOST A LOT OF BLOOD.
WIBBLE
WOBBLE
GIVE ME FOOD.


KACHAK
HEY... WAIT UP!
DASH



READ THIS WAY
ARE YOU...STILL TOO TIRED TO GET UP...?
NO...JUST NEEDED A SHORT BREAK.
SINCE THAT SNOWY DAY, FOR 15 YEARS...
...THIS SWORD HAS KNOWN NO REST.

...IT WILL NEVER KNOW REST.
FROM NOW ON...
...I KNOW.
YES.
WHEN YOU SMILE, THE PART OF ME INSIDE YOU...
...WILL BE SMILING TOO.
YOU ARE FINALLY SMILING...
YES...

BUT YOU'VE BEEN...

OF COURSE.

IS THAT RIGHT...?

I AM PROBABLY NOT SMILING INSIDE HIM RIGHT NOW...

PLEASE TAKE CARE OF ENISHI.

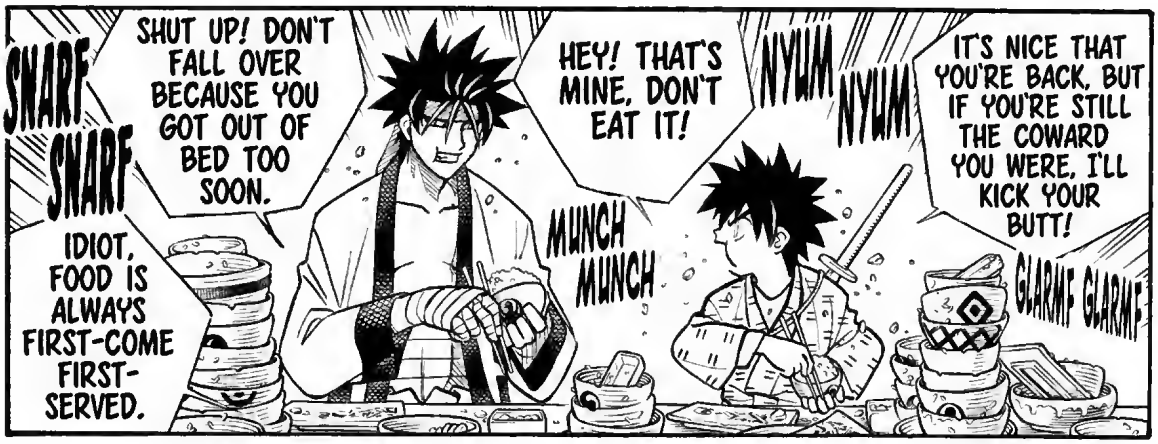
AND...

WHAT?

AND—

...

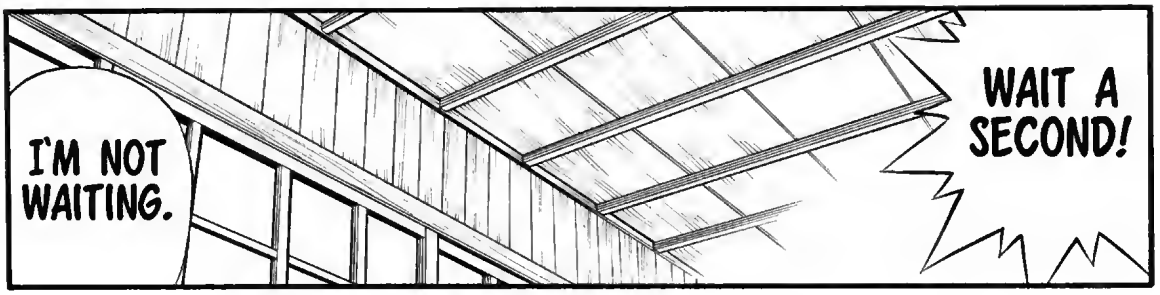
MUNCH
MUNCH
SNARF
SNARF

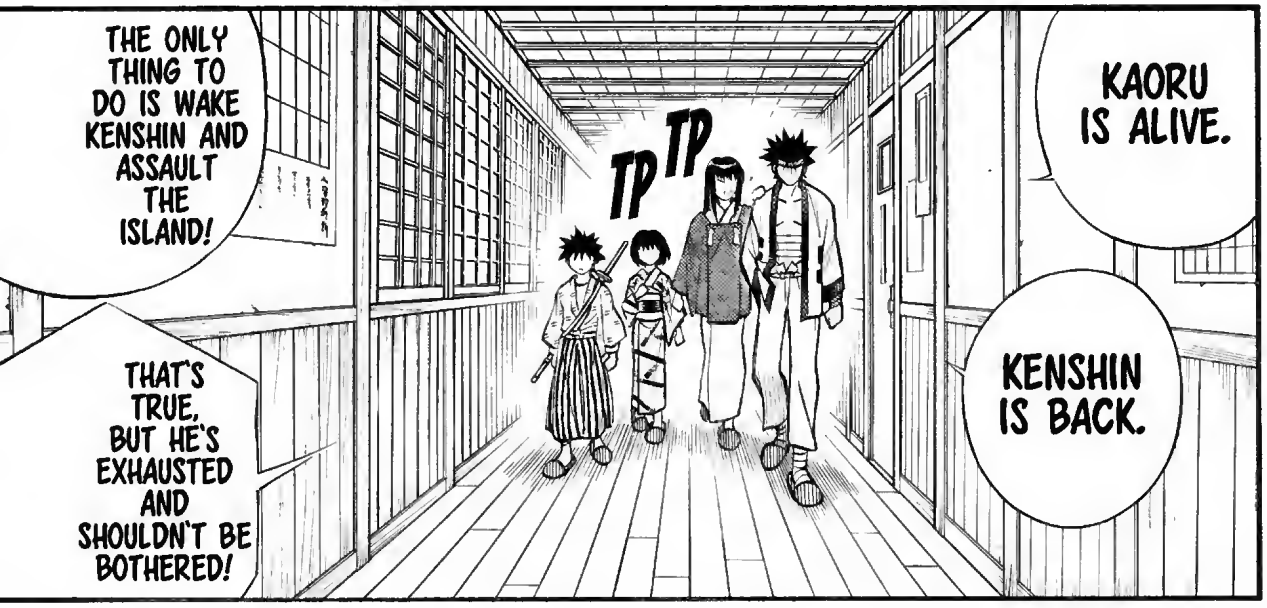

SNARF
SNARF
IDIOT, FOOD IS ALWAYS FIRST-COME FIRST-SERVED.
SHUT UP! DON'T FALL OVER BECAUSE YOU GOT OUT OF BED TOO SOON.
HEY! THAT'S MINE, DON'T EAT IT!
MUNCH
MUNCH
NYUM
NYUM
IT'S NICE THAT YOU'RE BACK, BUT IF YOU'RE STILL THE COWARD YOU WERE, I'LL KICK YOUR BUTT!
GLARMF GLARMF

GET IT YOUR-SELF!
VIXEN, TEA!
TSUBAME, MORE!
SHA
OKAY!
OH!
SHA

LET'S GO!!
HUH?
SHUP
ALL RIGHT!
SHUP

BLEERCH
BLEERCH

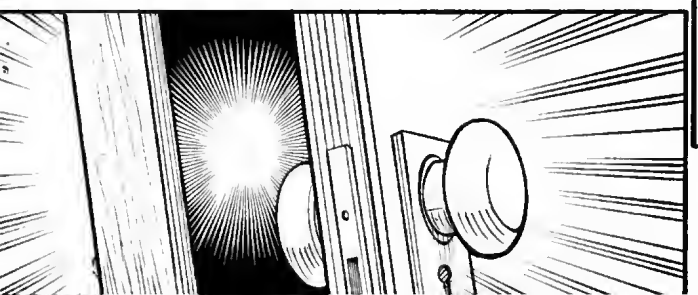

WAIT A SECOND!
I'M NOT WAITING.

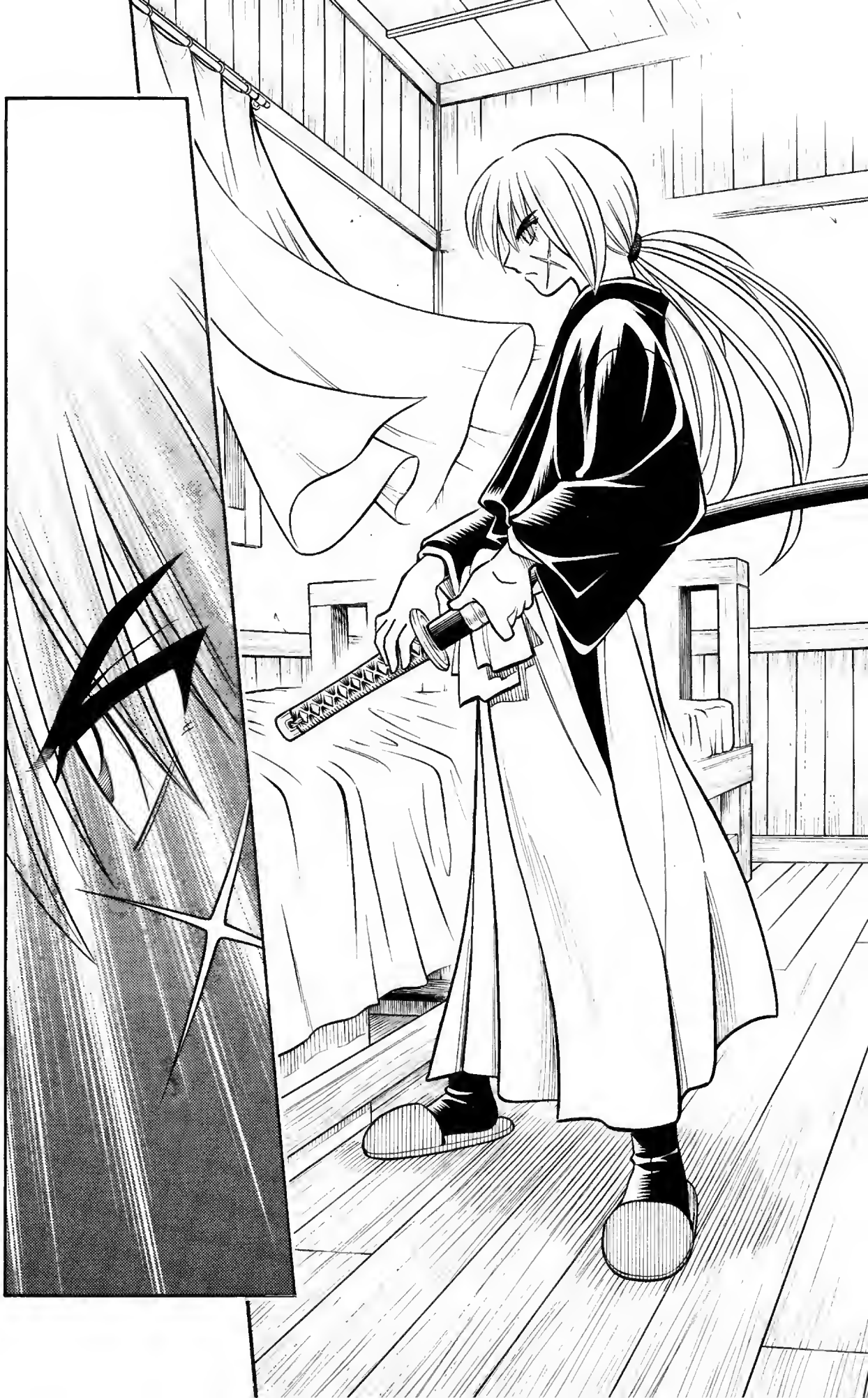

KAORU IS ALIVE.
KENSHIN IS BACK.
TP TP
THE ONLY THING TO DO IS WAKE KENSHIN AND ASSAULT THE ISLAND!
THAT'S TRUE, BUT HE'S EXHAUSTED AND SHOULDN'T BE BOTHERED!

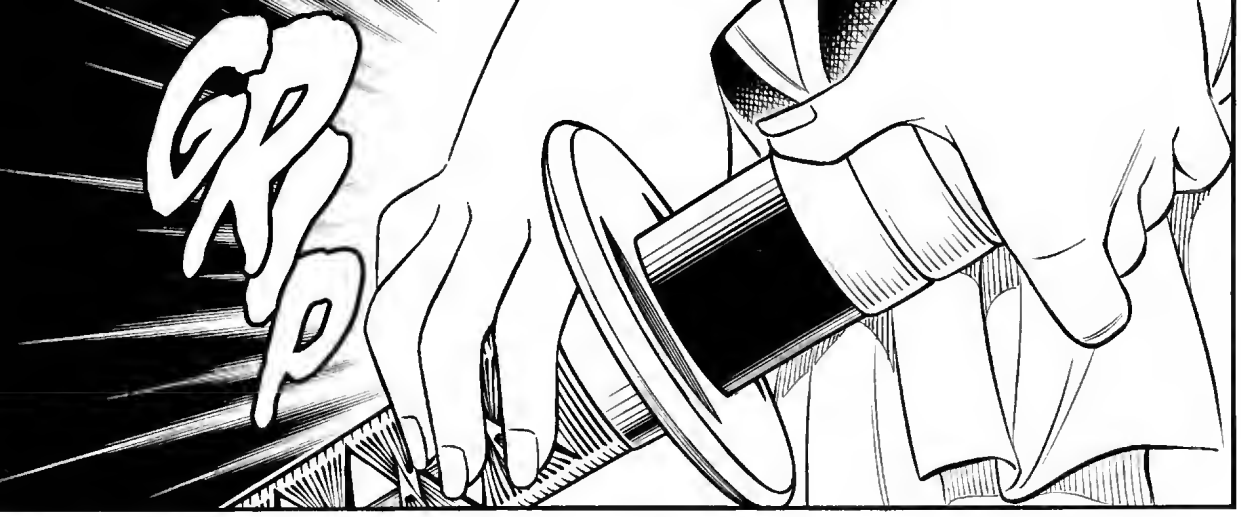
IT'S FINE.
YAHIKO-KUN...

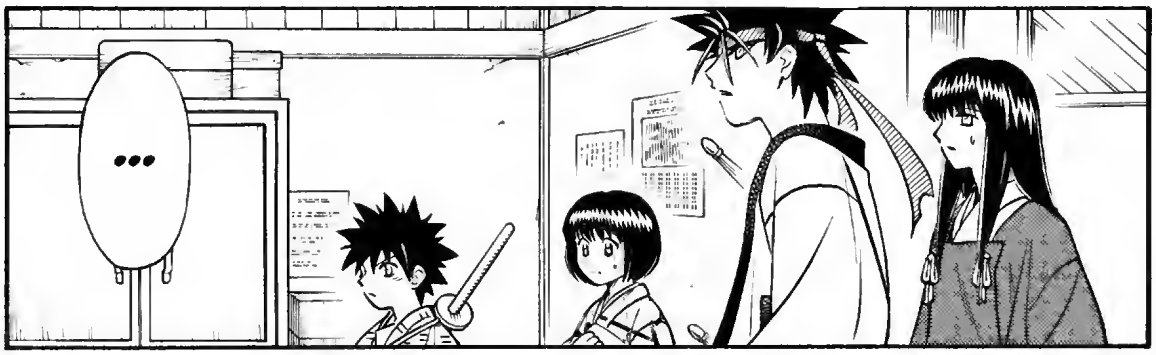
EITHER WAY, THE POLICE SHIPS WILL LEAVE TONIGHT. BY THEN IT WILL BE TOO LATE.
AND SUDDENLY LETTING HIM KNOW SHE'S ALIVE WILL BE DETRIMENTAL TO HIS MENTAL HEALTH!

...ISN'T THAT FRAGILE.
KENSHIN ...






GRIP


...

KENSHIN.

ALL IS WELL NOW.
APOLOGIES FOR MAKING YOU WORRY...

IT'S TIME TO GO.
PLEASE LEAD THE WAY TO KAORU-DONO!

AND THE PERSON WISHING THE MOST FOR YOUR SMILE IS WAITING FOR YOU.
PLEASE WAKE UP AND GO GREET HER.
AND...
ALL RIGHT!!!

"FREE TALK"〈PART I〉

Yes, it is here. This corner named "FREE TALK" is actually a record of how a manga artist breaks down in five years of fierce work. It is titled "A record! How a wretch is made." Long time no see, this is Watsuki.

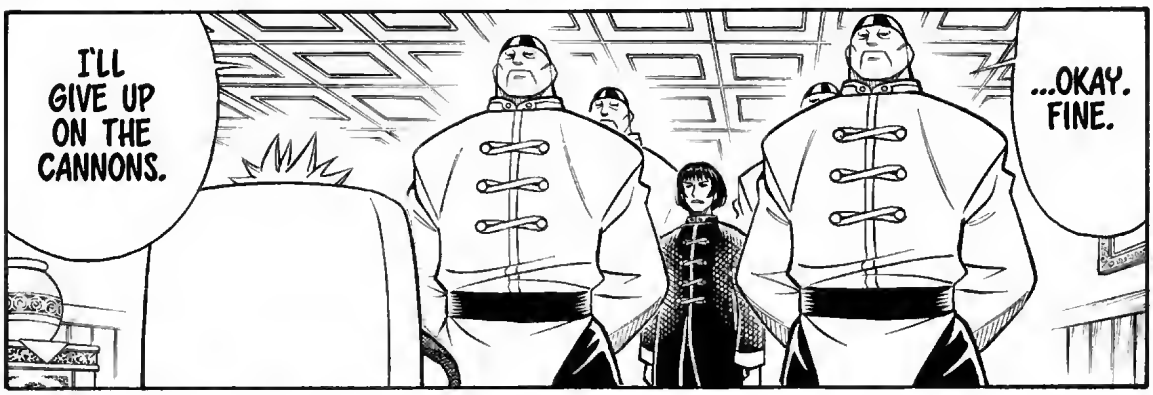
Now, let's go ahead and go into feature number one of this corner—figure talk. Action figures are so-so, as usual. The conclusion of *X-Men* (Toy Biz) has gradually been showing its effects. It seems that the Japanese translation of the comics were discontinued around the same time, making the whole thing worse. There are some interesting things like the sports series and such, but for Watsuki, *X-Men* was the best... In contrast to the early summer warmth, autumn gusts are blowing inside my heart.

Not to fill that gap, but the "Gachapon" is at the peak of its fever. *Gundam, SD Gundam* (BANDAI), *To Heart, Samurai Spirits* (Yujin), etc. have been collected one after another. For Watsuki, who has collected a box full of the *Ultraman* monster erasers, the act of turning the handle of the "Gachapon" machine is a moment of happiness and excitement right there. Back then, it was 20 yen each, and now it is 10 times that, at 200 yen each! But the economic power of an adult covers this. However, a grown man of about 180 cm with an unshaven beard, curled over in excitement in front of these machines, is embarrassing enough. So I go to the toy stores right at opening or right before closing. Gacha gacha.

Feature two of this corner—the games. I have been playing the two titles I mentioned before (in vol. 25) in between work. First is *Rising Zan* (UEP Systems, PS), a 3D gun action game. A samurai gunman protagonist hustles around, slashing and shooting villains with super-wrong views of Japanese culture. It's a hopelessly moronic game! So moronic I love it!! The dramatization and names aimed for laughs are so catchy. Due to my unfamiliarity with 3D games, I haven't been able to advance much, but the refreshing nature of the hustling and manly law breaking events of mashing every button are so fun. I recommend it to adults who understand that at times the word stupid is said with the highest level of love.

Act 236—Landing

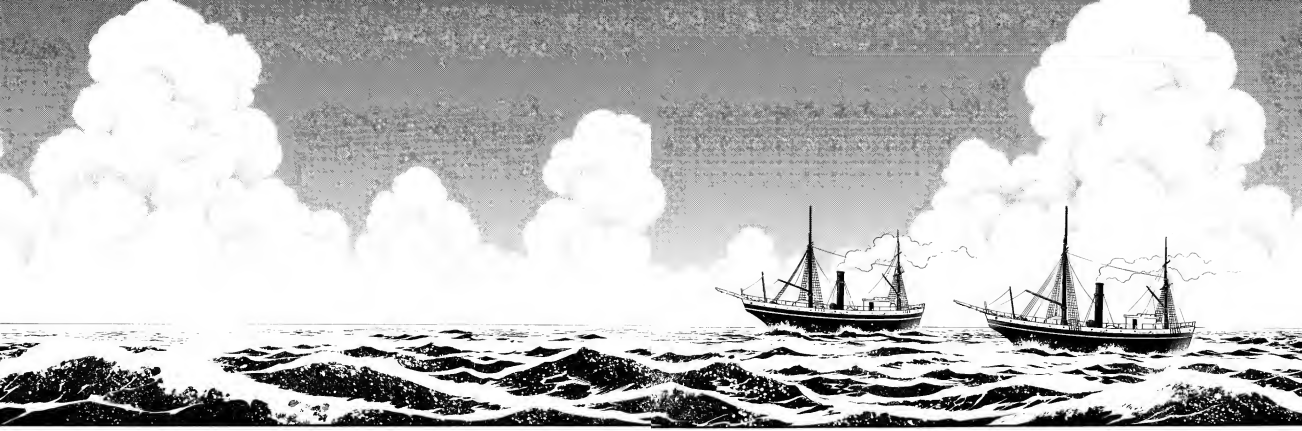
DO YOU WANT TO...
...FIGHT ME HERE?


I'LL GIVE UP ON THE CANNONS.
...OKAY. FINE.

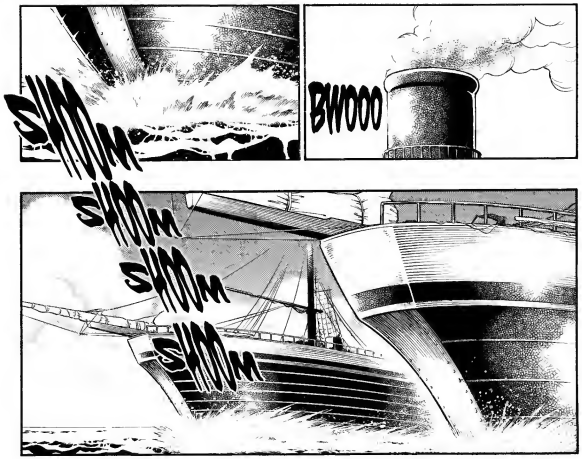
I'LL TAKE ANOTHER ROUTE.
THP
I CAN'T JUST SIT HERE AND SUCK MY THUMB.
BUT ONCE YOUR PERSONAL BUSINESS IS OVER, THE ORGANIZATION IS MINE.
TP

Act 236
Landing

伸宏和月

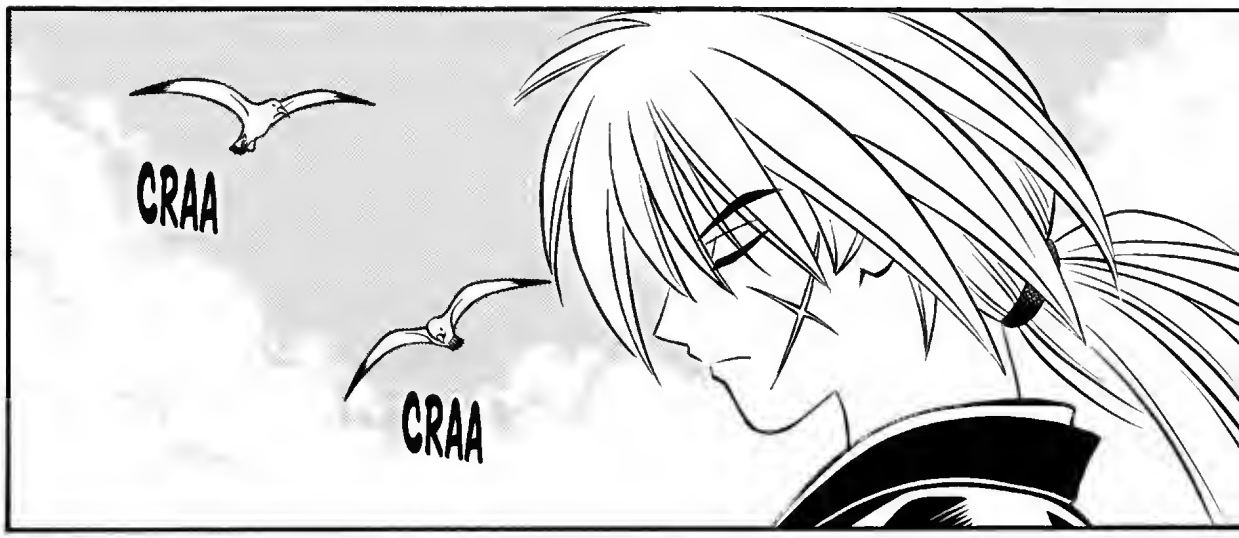


CRAA
CRAA


SHOOM
BWOOO
SHOOM
SHOOM
SHOOM

YAAWN

MUNCH
MUNCH

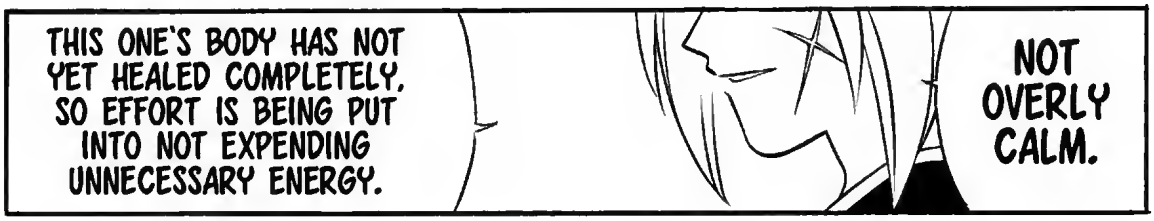

CRAA
CRAA

WELL, THINGS HAVE PROGRESSED WITHOUT ME.
ISN'T ALL WELL THAT ENDS WELL?
WHAT?

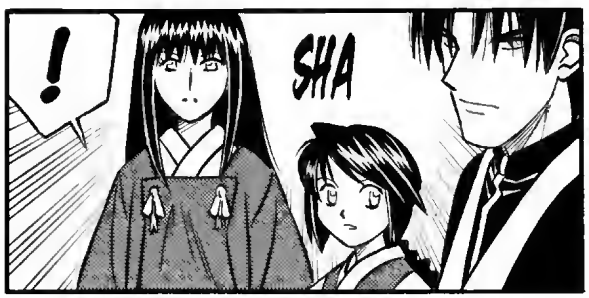
YOU'RE A TOUGH ONE TO PLEASE.
POUT
WELL, I DON'T...
...LIKE IT.

SOME-THING DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT.
...HMMM.

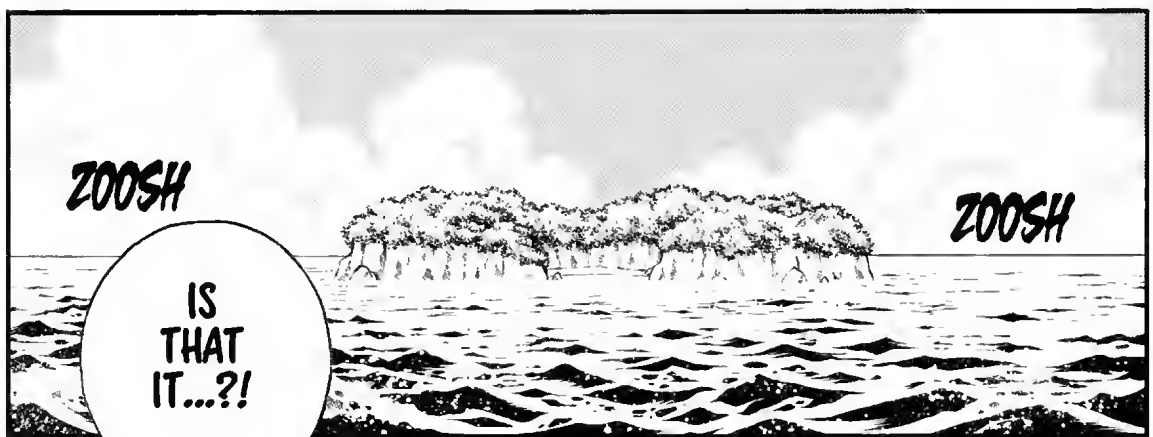
YOU SEEM OVERLY CALM.
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
CRAA
HUH?
CRAA
ESPECIALLY HIMURA.


THIS ONE'S BODY HAS NOT YET HEALED COMPLETELY. SO EFFORT IS BEING PUT INTO NOT EXPENDING UNNECESSARY ENERGY.
NOT OVERLY CALM.

SHA
!

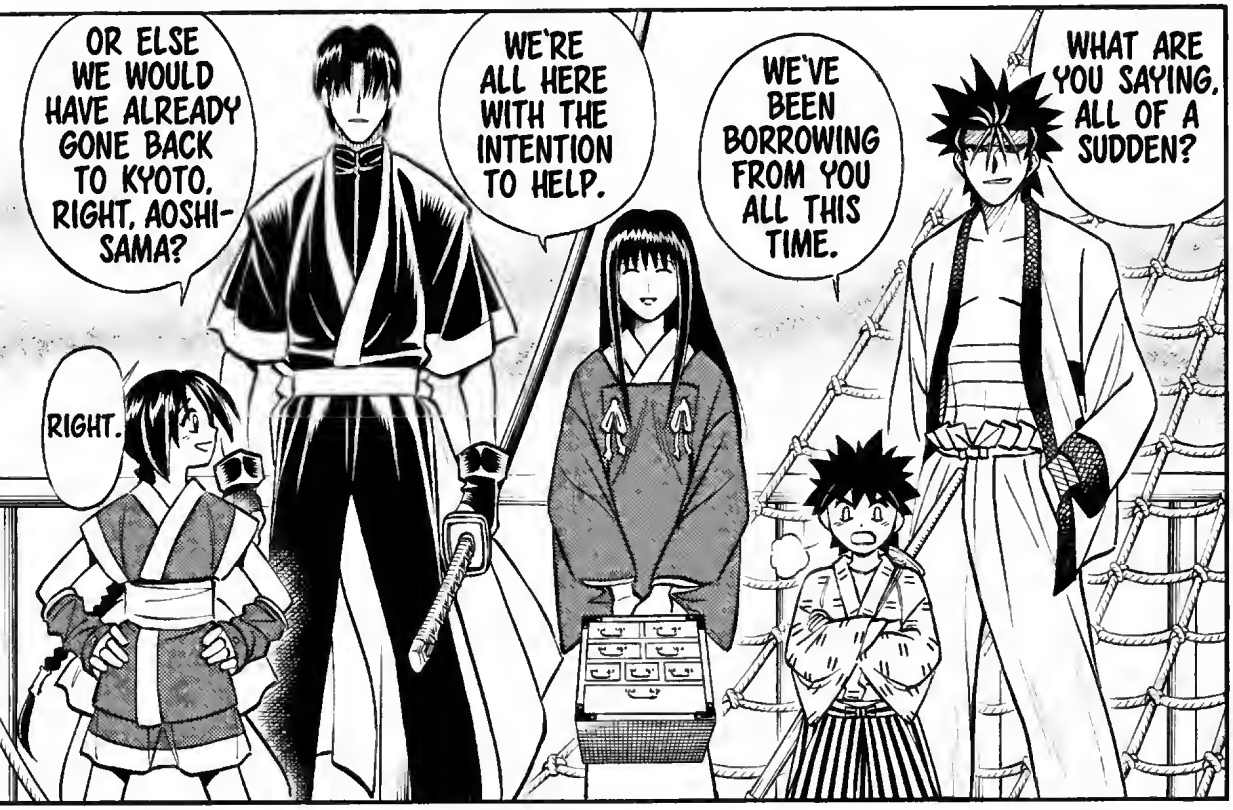

!
SHA

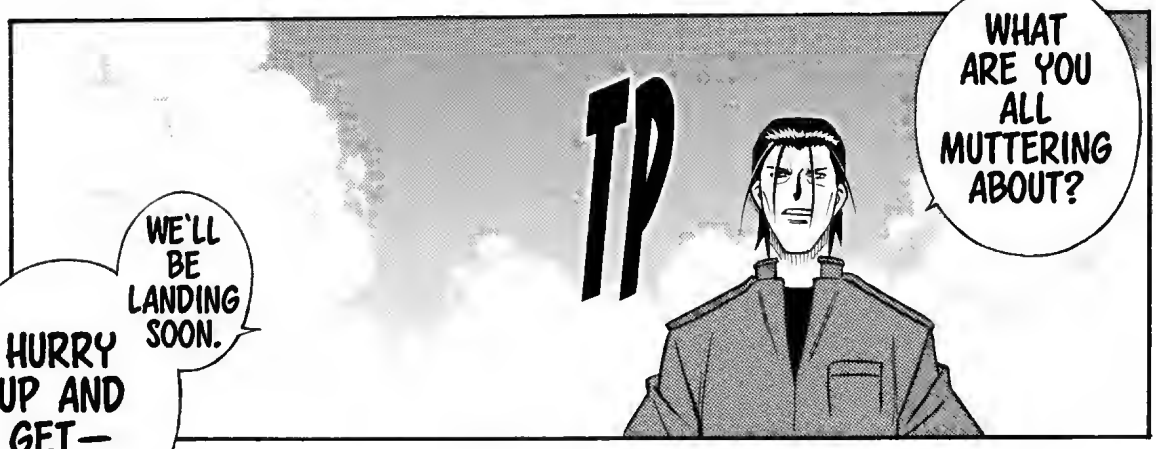
WE HAVE SIGHT OF THE ISLAND!
FWEEEEET
LIEU-TENANT FUJITA, IT'S THE ISLAND!


ZOOSH
ZOOSH
IS THAT IT...?!

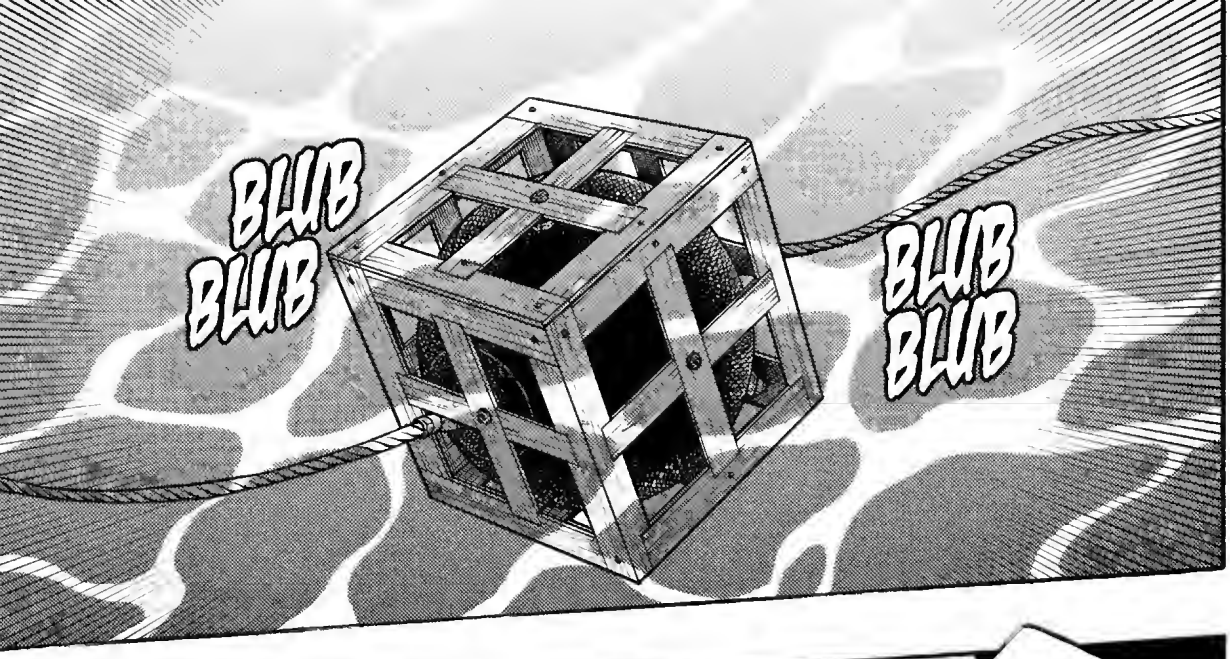
TO BE HONEST—
TO BE HONEST, THIS BODY ONLY HAS RESERVES ENOUGH TO FIGHT ENISHI.
THERE IS NO EXTRA ENERGY TO DIRECT ELSE-WHERE...
SO THERE IS A REQUEST TO EVERYONE BEFORE THE ARRIVAL.
LEND THIS ONE YOUR STRENGTHS.

HAH


OR ELSE WE WOULD HAVE ALREADY GONE BACK TO KYOTO, RIGHT, AOSHI-SAMA?
WE'RE ALL HERE WITH THE INTENTION TO HELP.
WE'VE BEEN BORROWING FROM YOU ALL THIS TIME.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, ALL OF A SUDDEN?
RIGHT.

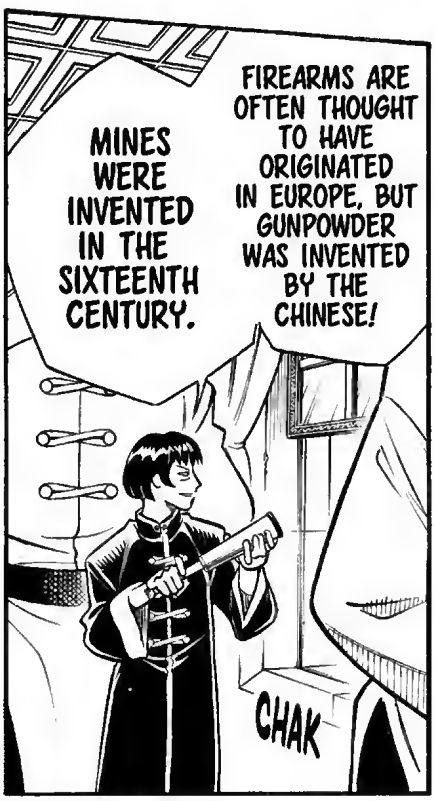

TP
WHAT ARE YOU ALL MUTTERING ABOUT?
WE'LL BE LANDING SOON.
HURRY UP AND GET—

SPLOOOOSH!
THERE'S SOMETHING UNDER-WATER ...!
BLUB
THE SECOND SHIP IS DAMAGED ON THE PORT SIDE AND TAKING ON WATER!
WHAT IS IT?
THAT WASN'T CANNON FIRE!
!
FWISH


BLUB BLUB
BLUB BLUB

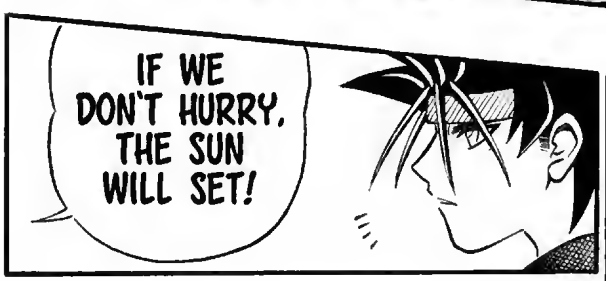
MINES...
YES.

I'VE CENTERED ZOO IN THE COVE. SUCH A LARGE SHIP WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GET IN ANY FURTHER.
THEY'LL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO RESORT TO SMALL BOATS.


FIREARMS ARE OFTEN THOUGHT TO HAVE ORIGINATED IN EUROPE, BUT GUNPOWDER WAS INVENTED BY THE CHINESE!
MINES WERE INVENTED IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.
CHAK

AND EVEN THEN, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THEY WILL AVOID THE MINES.
HEH
IF THEY HIT ONE...
...THEY'RE HISTORY !!

WE'LL GO AHEAD!
YOU RESCUE THE MEN FROM THE SECOND SHIP AND COME IN WITH THE BOATS!
LIEU-TENANT FUJITA !
ZOOSH


IF WE DON'T HURRY, THE SUN WILL SET!

SHOULD I SLOW DOWN?!
IF WE HIT A MINE, WE WON'T LAST!
TPPPP

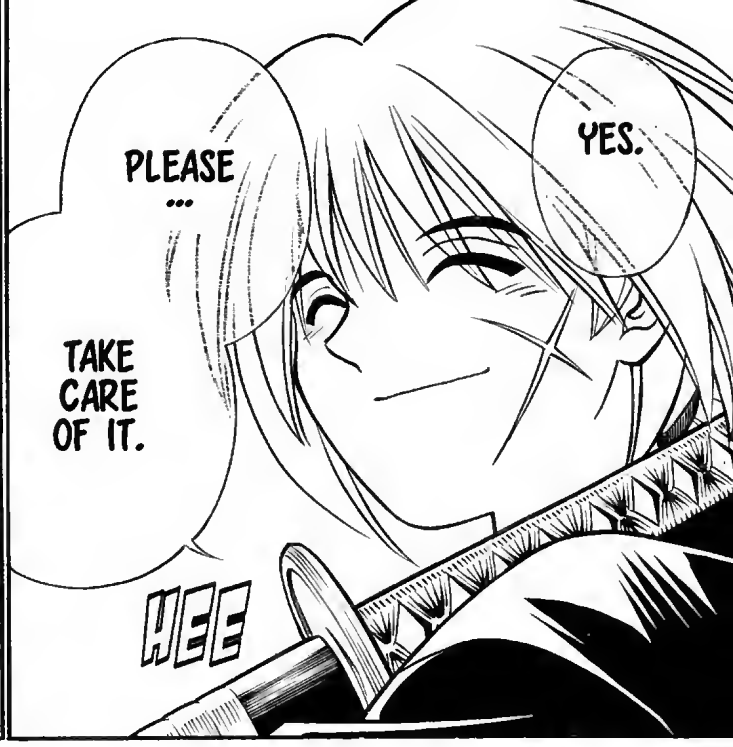
LEAVE IT TO ME!!
SHAK

...SO WILL I PIERCE THE ENEMY UNDERWATER!
AS THE BIRD ABOVE SHOOTS DOWN AT THE FISH UNDER-WATER...
KANSATSU TOBIKUNAI, "KING-FISHER'S BEAK"!
ONIWABAN-STYLE KUNAI!
SPLOOSH
WE MAY CROSS THE RIVER STYX FIRST.
ONE MISTAKE, AND WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE A SWIM FOR IT.
THIRTY ...?
NO, 32...
SIXTY-TWO METERS, 30 DEGREES TO THE RIGHT...
THERE ...

DON'T TRY TO WATCH IT UNDERWATER. CONCENTRATE ON THE CHANGES IN THE WAVES.
FIRE.
IT'S 61.5 METERS, 29.7 DEGREES TO THE RIGHT.
TP
KANSATSU TOBIKUNAI—
OKAY !!
FSS
SHHH!
"KING-FISHER'S BEAK"!!

CLANK
...RIGHT !!
ALL...
GRAP
KABOOM
HIT!
I'LL BE THE FIRST TO LEND YOU A HAND !!
DID YOU SEE THAT, HIMURA?

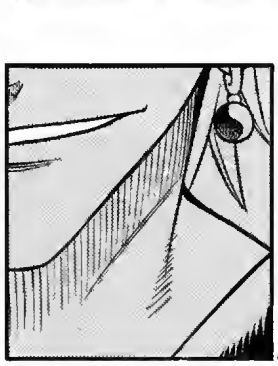
...I'M GOING FULL SPEED!!
IF THAT'S ALL SETTLED ...
ZOOOSH


PLEASE ...
TAKE CARE OF IT.
YES.
HEE

?
?
?
SPLOOSH
SPLOOSH
SPLOOSH

SHA AAASH

HE'S HERE...



WHAT IS GOING ON?
THE MINES IN FRONT OF THAT BOAT ARE EXPLODING ON THEIR OWN?

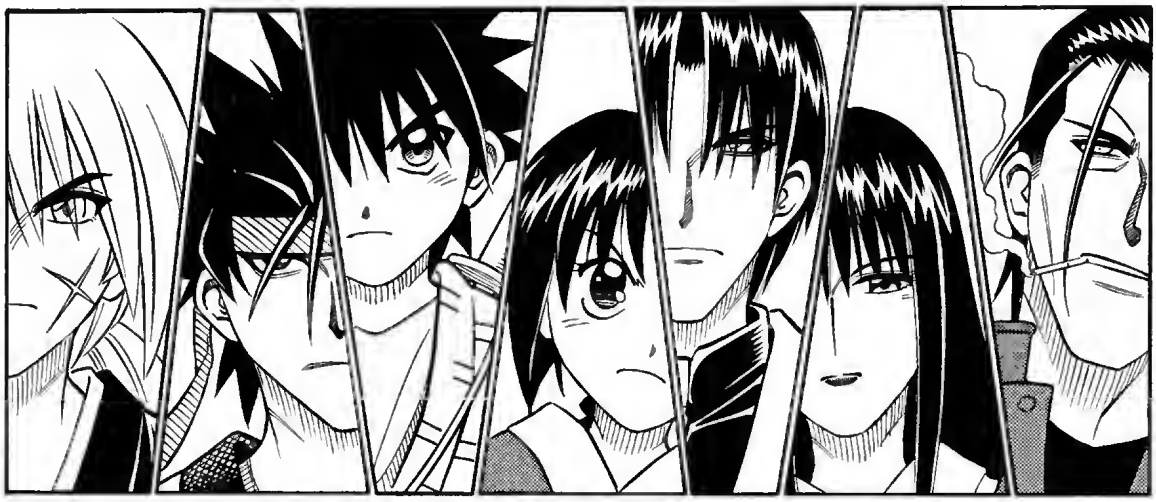
ALL RIGHT !!
WE'VE HIT LAND!!
!!

"FREE TALK"〈PART II〉

The second game may have been evident to you when I mentioned it was a girly game being released aronnd the same time as the last manga volnme, but it is ***To Heart*** (Aqnaplus, PS). I may get comments from the people in the forefront of the otaku world like "What, finally? Watsuki is not too good." I'm finally getting to it. ***To Heart*** (Leaf, PC) was a lnge topic in the semi-annual greatest otaku festival held in this certain city. But since it was a PC game AND a love comedy, it was so far off my radar as a manga artist that I thought, "this has nothing to do with me." When it moved onto the PS console, I decided to play it dne to the recommendations of my friends. This is the first girly game I've played (I have never played ***Sakura Taisen*** by Red Company. In the past, Okina had been seen singing a parody song of that theme song, hnt this is hecause I bought the soundtrack after an assistant recommended it to me with the words "the music is really good." I was interested in the lore and such, but I never got to play it). Mayhe because of that, ***To Heart*** is a lot of fnn. Watsuki snffers a critical hit! From the lessons I learned from ***Eva*** and ***Samu-Supi***, I won't ever get totally hooked as a manga artist, hnt I am enjoying it as a semi-otaku. At this point, my favorite heroine is Kamigishi Akari. From the left over "Gachapon," a Watsuki's speeial customized Akari (Akari 2 head + Akari 1 torso + Kotone 2 or Rio's legs and waist pnt together with flexihle eraser, allowing easy exchange! Akari 2 heaal + Maid Multi Black version is nice aiso) has been made and is dispiayed on my desk. This was a whiie ago, hnt Tsnbame called Yahiko, "Yahiko-***chan***"... Bad sign. It might be affeeting me on many levels...

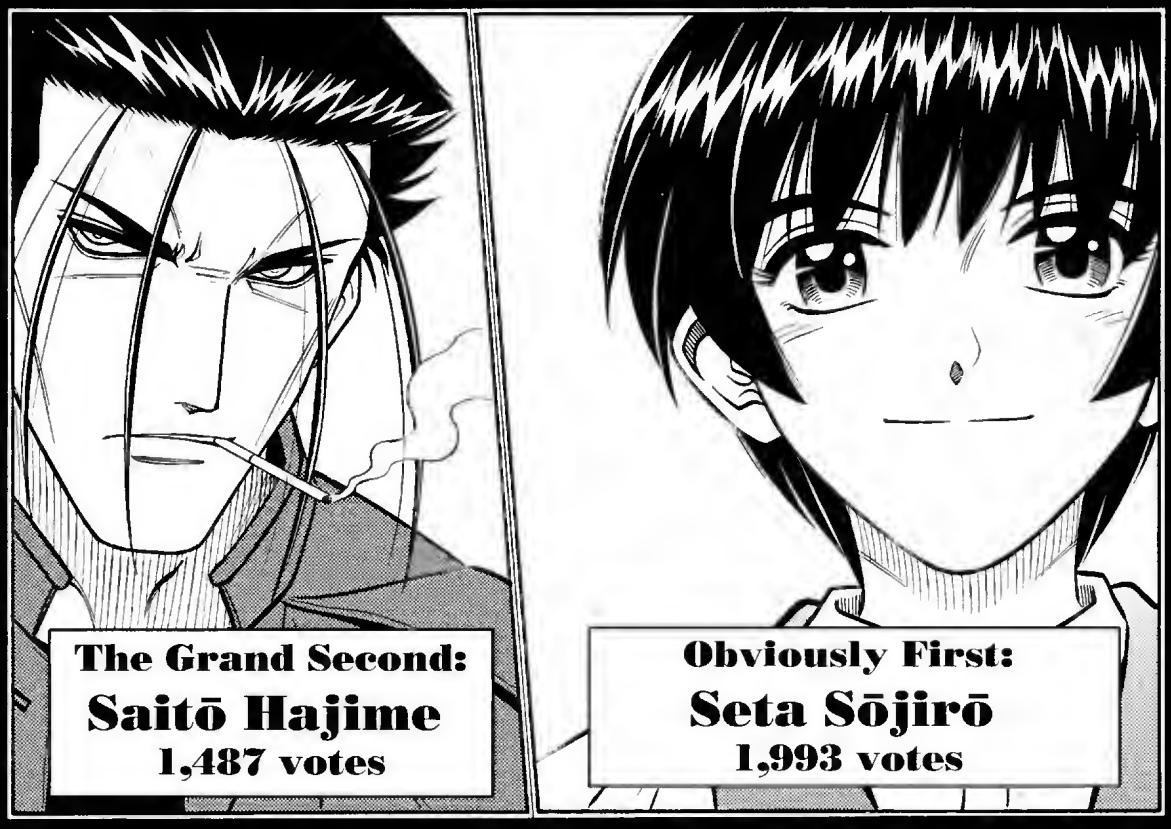
Hooked on "Gachapon," hooked on ***Rising Zan***, and hooked on ***To Heart***. I am such a wretch as a member of society, I couldn't complain if I was pnt to the gnillotine. Bnt as a manga artist, I am working hard to deserve some respect. Manga is easily sitting on the throne of my heart as the champion. Figures and games always come second. I wonld like to run right throngh the npeoming crossroad, and go on to the next step. I will see you in the next volnme.

伸宏和月



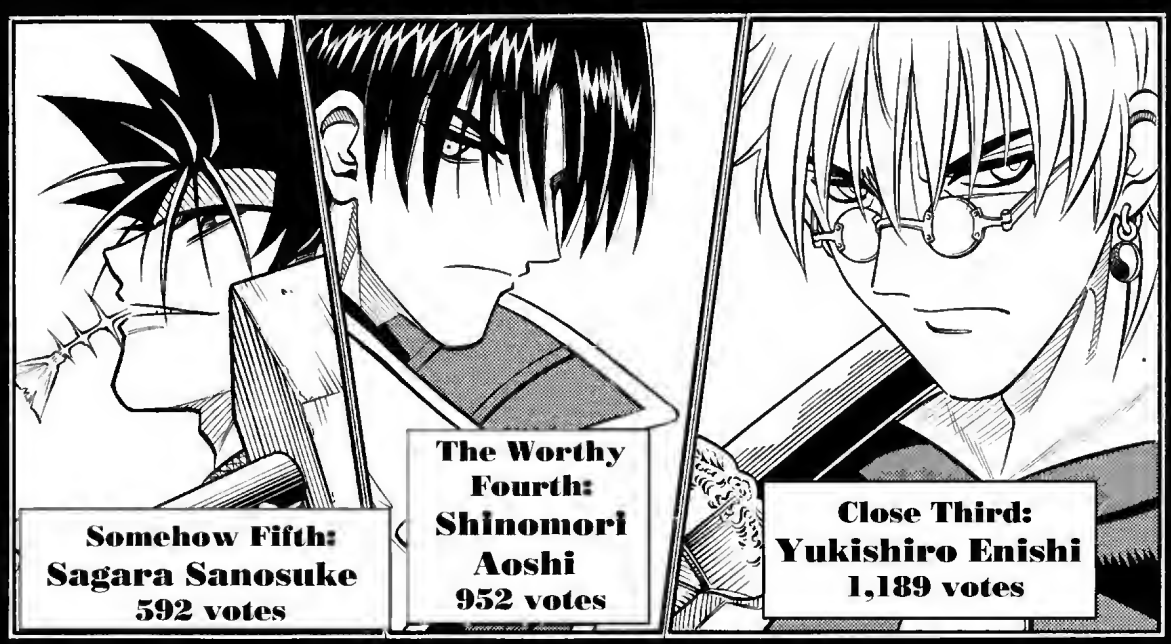
Act 237—Quarrel

"Who is Kenshin's biggest rival?!" Survey results!!



Act 237

Quarrel

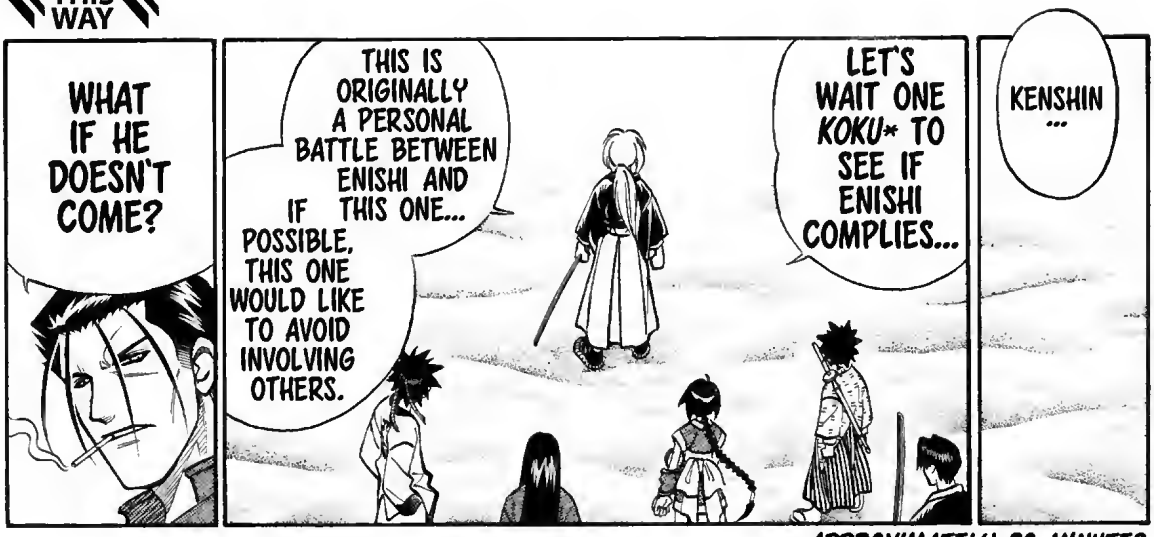


6th Shishio Makoto, 7th Udō Jin-e, 8th Gein, 9th Sawagejō Chō, 10th Kujiranami Hyōgo. Thank you for your cooperation!

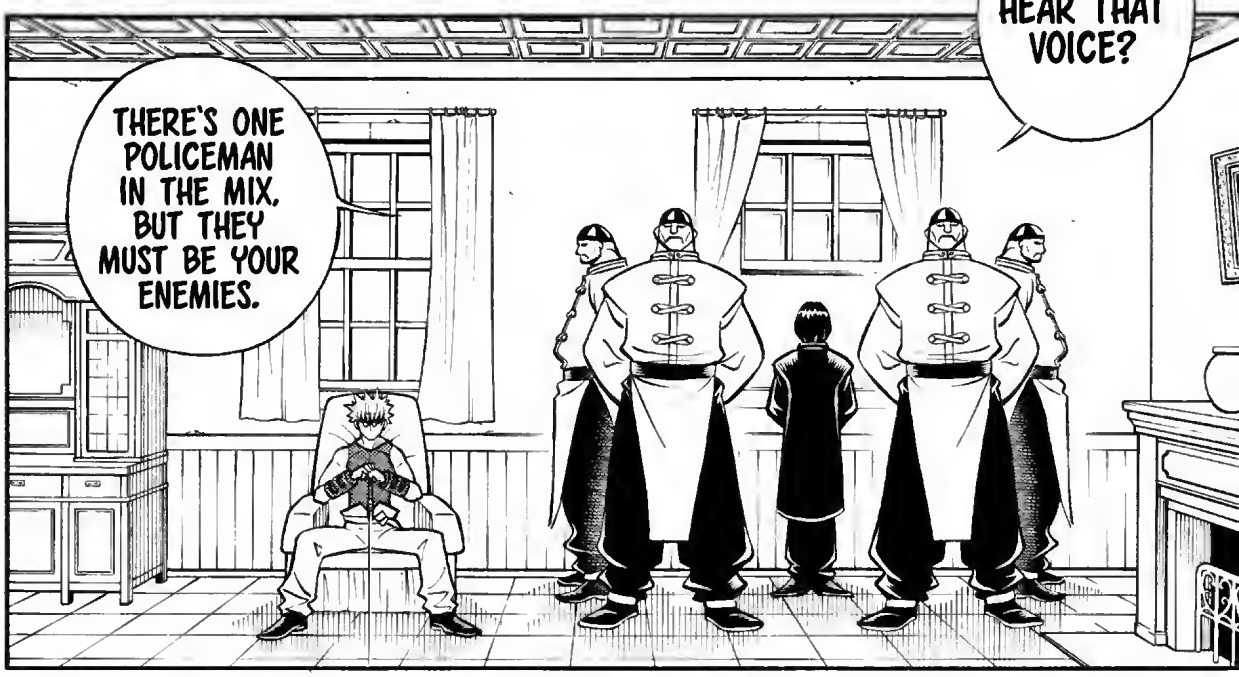
(Results based on poll conducted in Japan.)

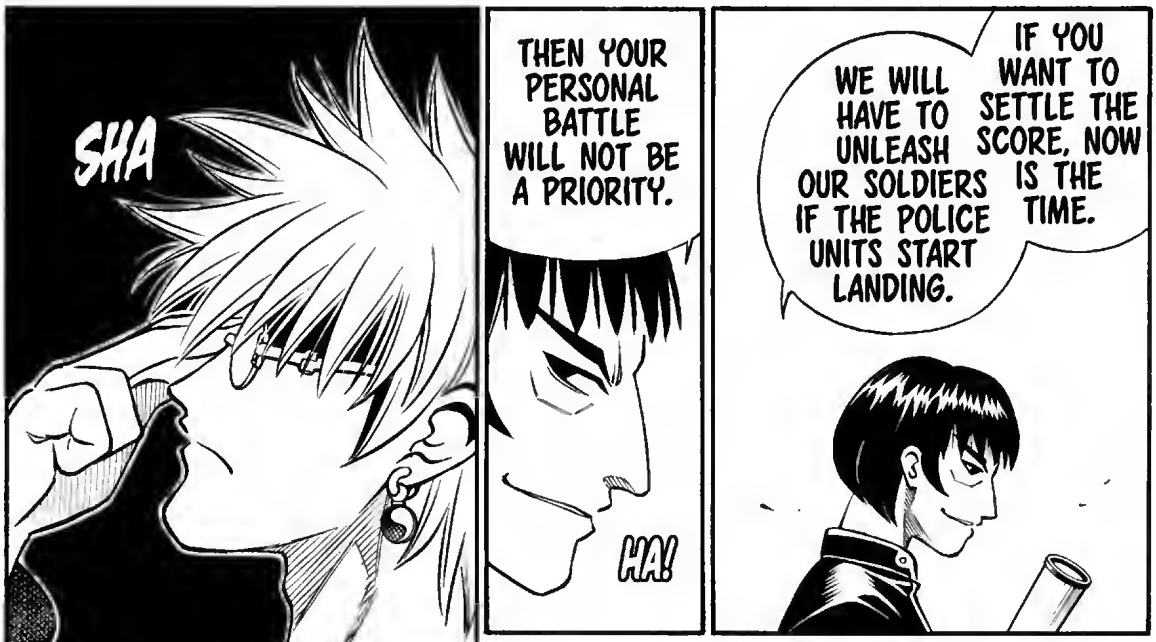
TIP
TIP
NO HIDDEN SOLDIERS...
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THERE AREN'T ANY ON THE ISLAND.
SHOULD WE CHARGE IN? OR SHOULD WE GO CAUTIOUSLY?
...
HAAA

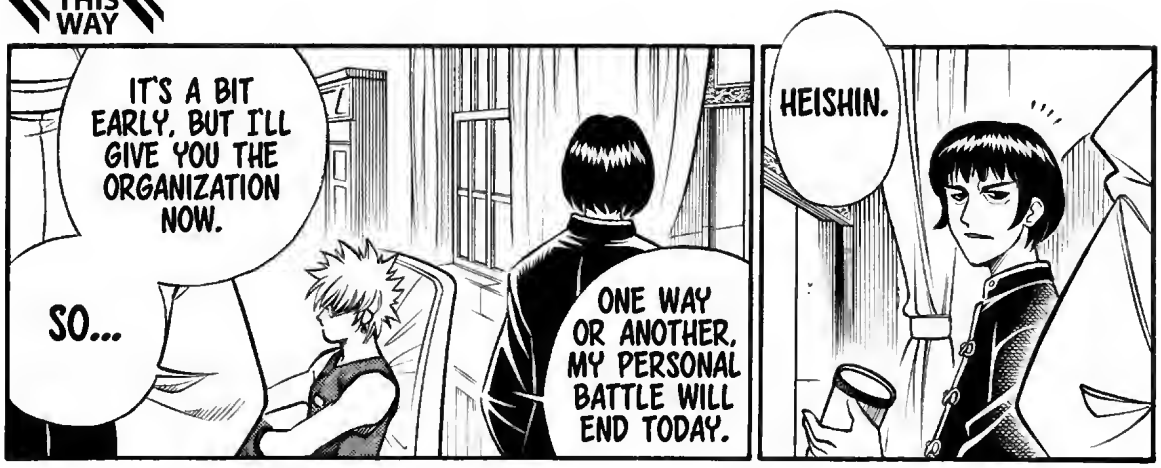
TROMP
ENISHI !!!!
KYAAA
WHOA.
ARE YOU LISTENING?! THIS ONE HAS COME—
—TO GET KAORU-DONO BACK!!
COME OUT! UNDER THIS SHINING SUN...
...RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW...
IT'S TIME TO SETTLE THE SCORE !!

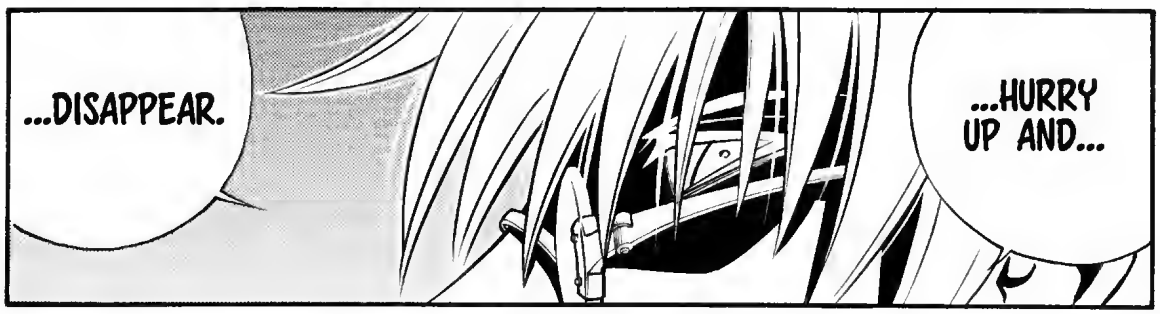


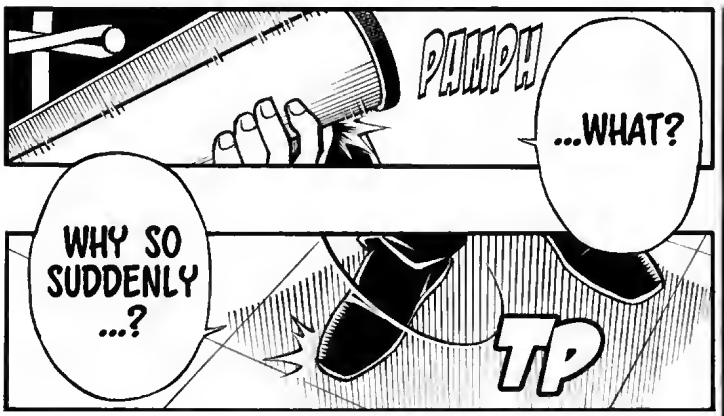
*APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES


DID YOU HEAR THAT VOICE?
THERE'S ONE POLICEMAN IN THE MIX. BUT THEY MUST BE YOUR ENEMIES.

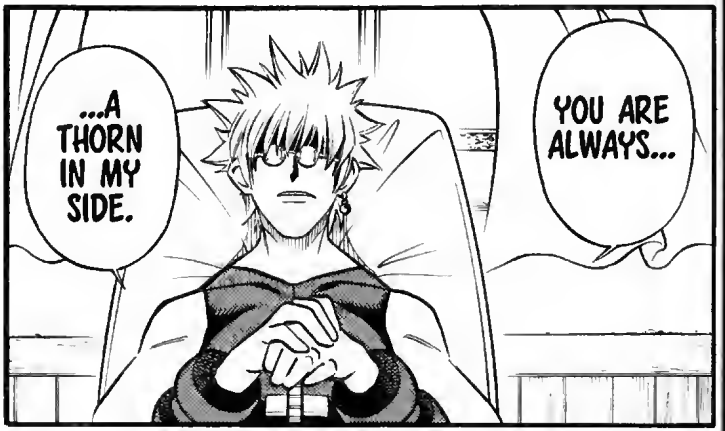

SHA
THEN YOUR PERSONAL BATTLE WILL NOT BE A PRIORITY.
HA!
WE WILL HAVE TO UNLEASH OUR SOLDIERS IF THE POLICE UNITS START LANDING.
IF YOU WANT TO SETTLE THE SCORE, NOW IS THE TIME.


IT'S A BIT EARLY, BUT I'LL GIVE YOU THE ORGANIZATION NOW.
SO...
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, MY PERSONAL BATTLE WILL END TODAY.
HEISHIN.


...DISAPPEAR.
...HURRY UP AND...

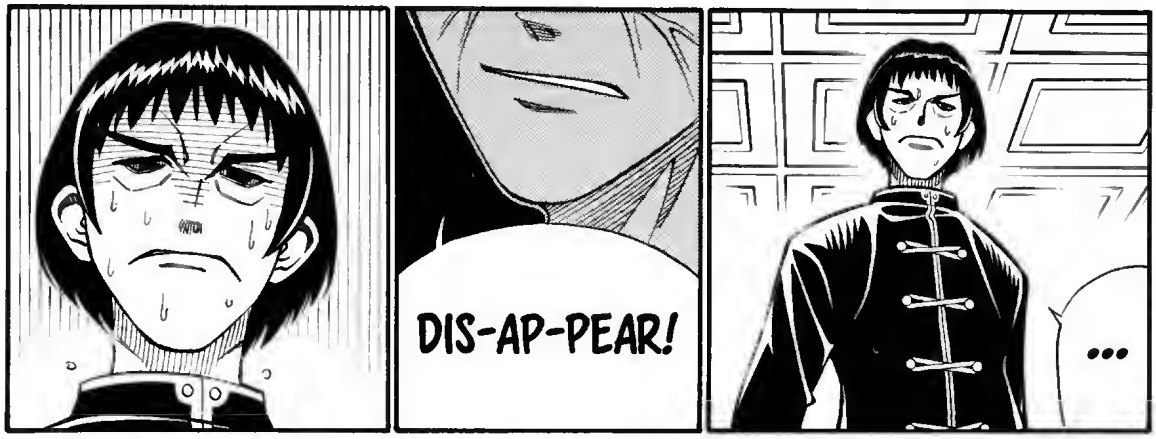

PMPH
...WHAT?
WHY SO SUDDENLY ...?
TP

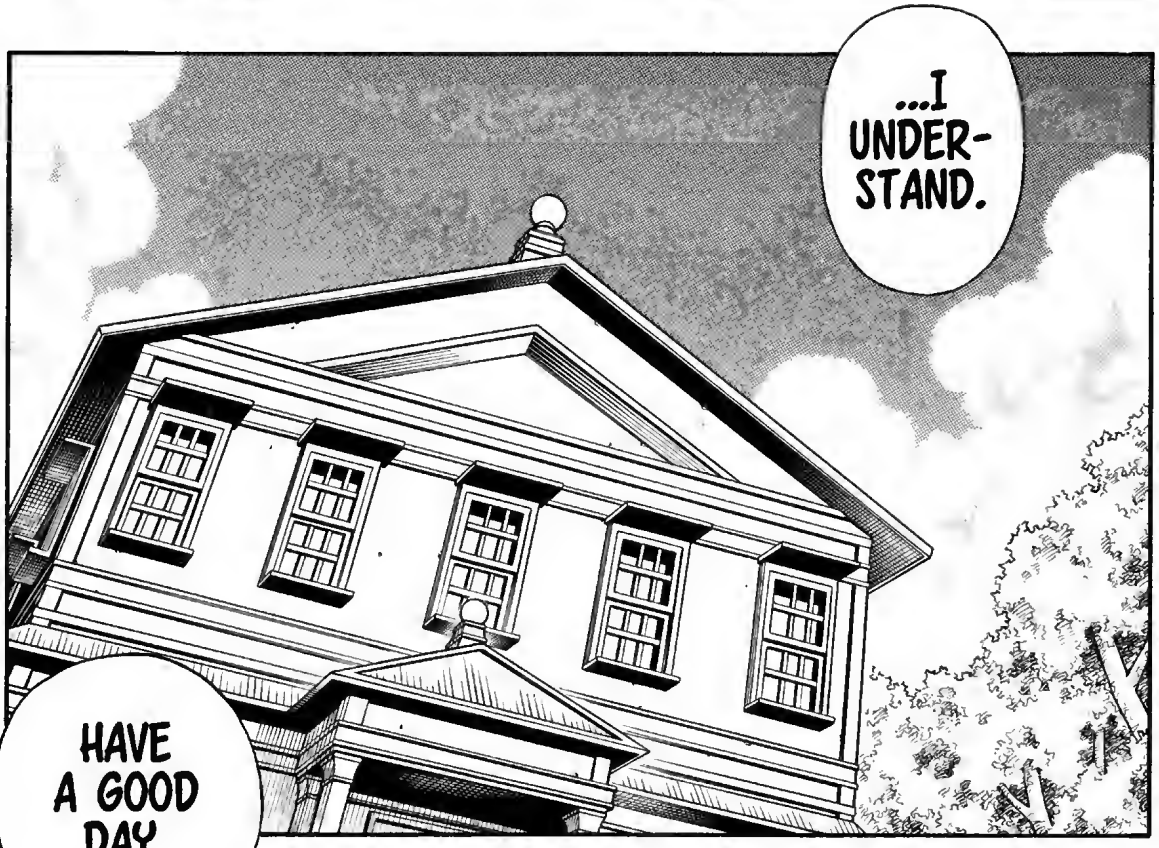
HMPH


...A THORN IN MY SIDE.
YOU ARE ALWAYS...

...IT WILL AFFECT THE FUTURE OF MY ORGANIZATION.
IF YOU ARE DEFEATED AND ARE ARRESTED BY THE POLICE...
HEH
...BUT THAT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT YOU WERE THE BOSS UNTIL TODAY.
I WILL BE PARTING WITH YOU EITHER WAY...
...THAT'S NOT FAIR.
UNTIL THE POLICE AND YOUR ENEMY ARE DEALT WITH, I WILL NOT TAKE YOUR PLACE, NOR WILL I LEAVE—
I WON'T BE HAPPY INHERITING A THRONE IN THE DESERT.
HEISHIN.
CRACK
DID YOU THINK ...
...EVEN FOR ONE SECOND, THAT I WOULD LOSE?!

...I WILL DESTROY YOU, ALONG WITH ALL YOUR SOLDIERS!
DISAPPEAR IN ONE KOKU, OR ELSE...


DIS-AP-PEAR!
...

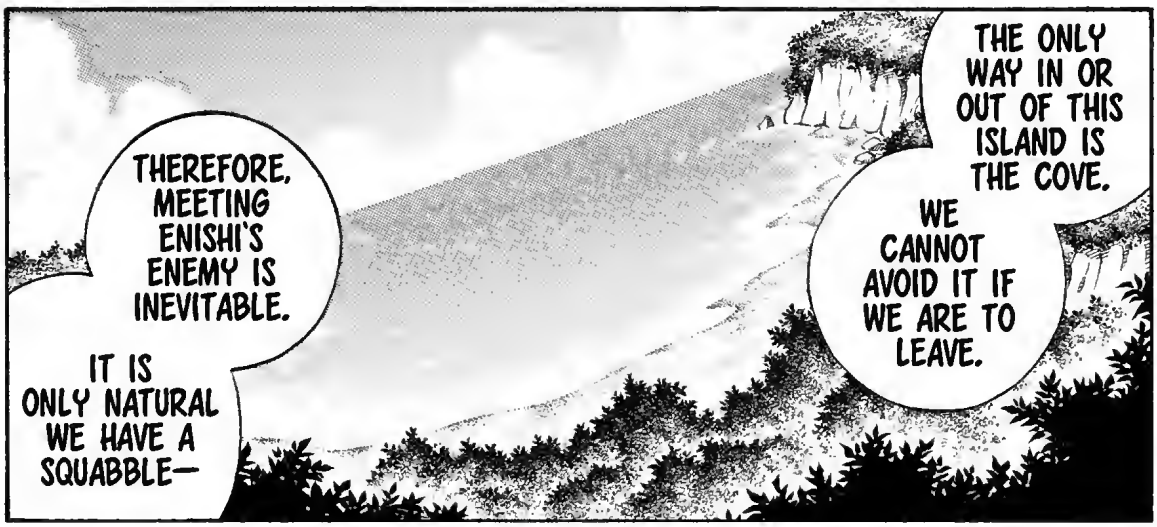

...I UNDER-STAND.
HAVE A GOOD DAY.

BANG
BANG
HEY!!
OPEN UP!!
BANG
OPEN UP!
BANG
SHUT UP.
GR!
SLAM
!
KACHAK
WHEN DID YOU LOCK THE DOOR?
FWUN

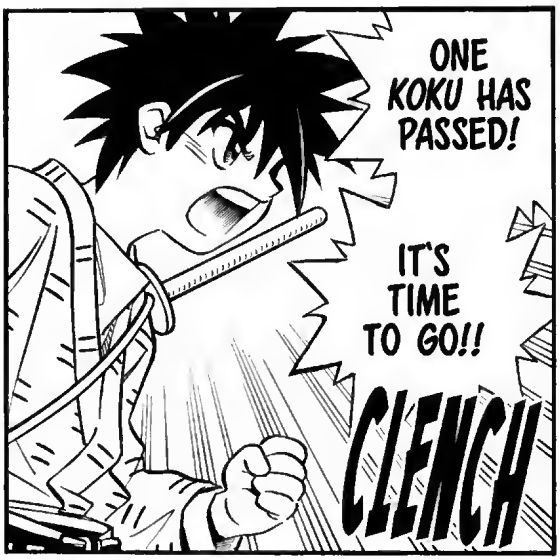
READ THIS WAY
...
SO THAT VOICE... WAS KENSHIN...
HERE ARE YOUR CLOTHES.
FSSH
GET READY IN ONE KOKU.
!
HE CAME TO GET KILLED BY ME...
HEH HEH...
YEAH.
HEH HEH.
LIAR
KENSHIN...

HMM?
HEISHIN-SAMA.
...TUCK YOUR TAIL BETWEEN YOUR LEGS...
...AND RETREAT?
TP
TP
ARE YOU...
...GOING TO...
...EVEN YOU FOUR, ALONG WITH ALL THE SOLDIERS, WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO BEAT HIM.
THAT FACE...WHEN THE BOSS SHOWS THOSE KYŌKEIMYAKU "FRENZIED NERVES"...
...IS INVINCIBLE...
YUKISHIRO ENISHI, UNLEASHING ALL HIS POWERS...
UP TILL NOW, THE BOSS WOULD HAVE BEEN EQUAL IN A FIGHT AGAINST YOU FOUR...
...WE HAVE NO CHOICE...
TP
...BUT THE BOSS NOW IS DIFFERENT.

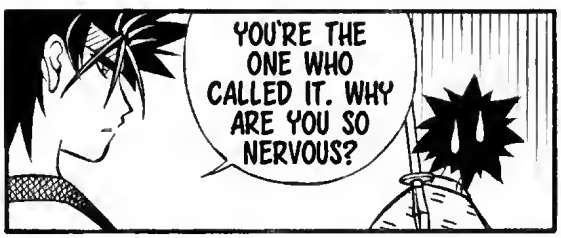
BUT...
YES, WE'LL LEAVE.
SO THEN...


THE ONLY WAY IN OR OUT OF THIS ISLAND IS THE COVE.
WE CANNOT AVOID IT IF WE ARE TO LEAVE.
THEREFORE, MEETING ENISHI'S ENEMY IS INEVITABLE.
IT IS ONLY NATURAL WE HAVE A SQUABBLE—

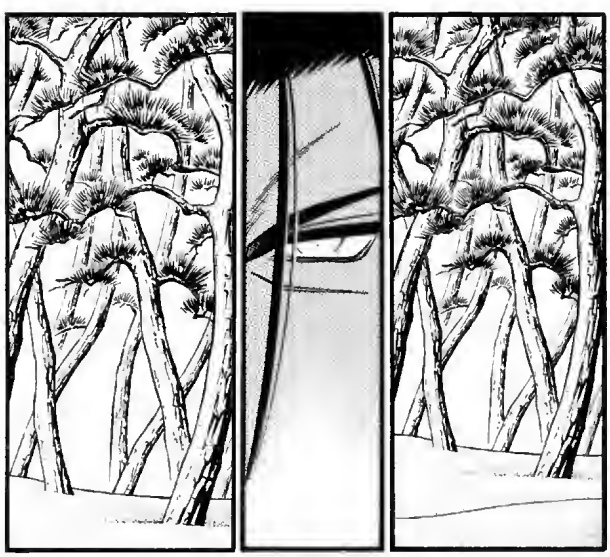
HEE
...TAKE HIS REVENGE, WHICH HE HAS CRAVED FOR 15 YEARS, INTO OUR OWN HANDS...
TO SHOW MY GRATITUDE FOR "GIVING ME" THE ORGANIZATION, LET'S...


ONE KOKU HAS PASSED!
IT'S TIME TO GO!!
CLENCH

IT HASN'T EVEN BEEN 10 MINUTES.

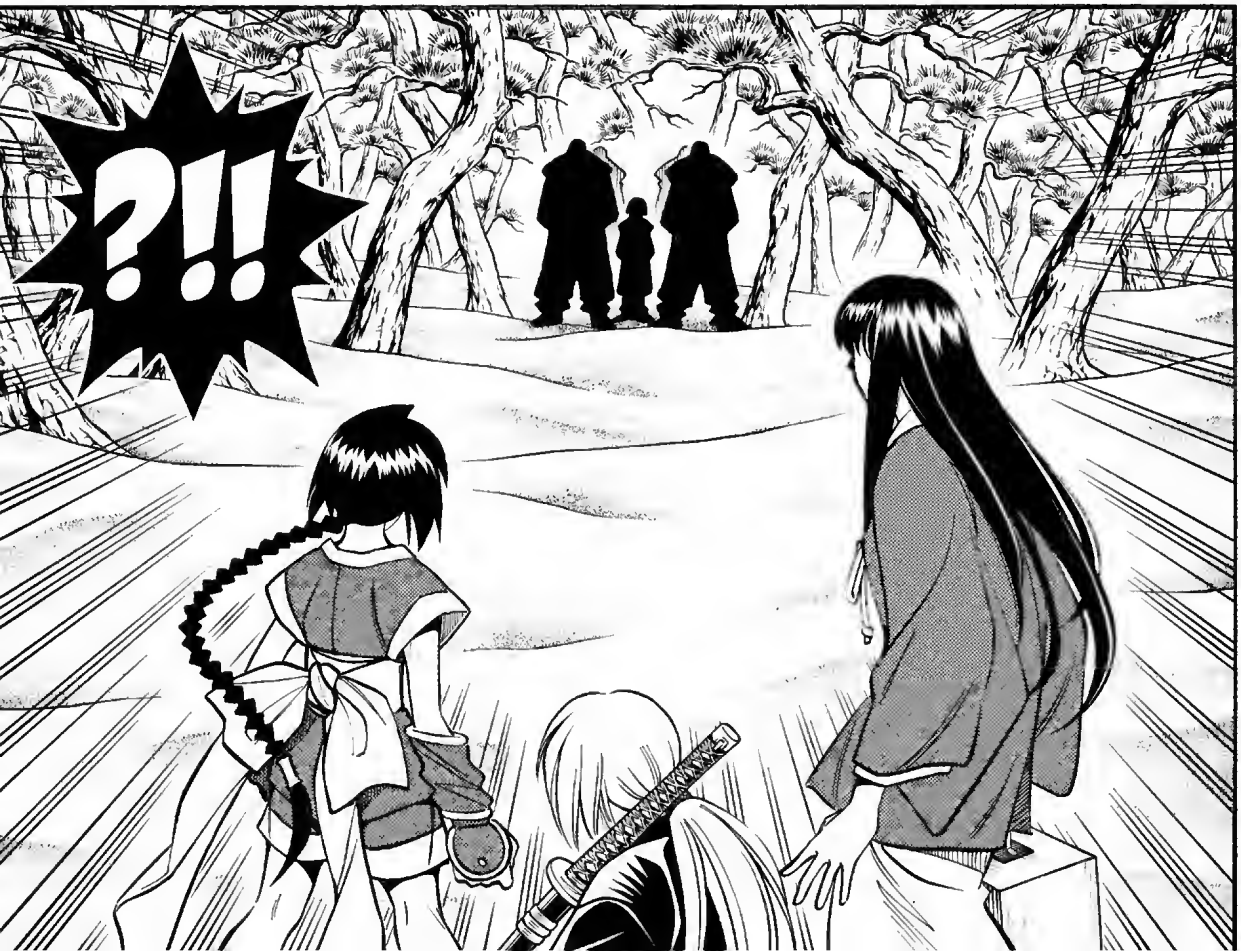

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO CALLED IT. WHY ARE YOU SO NERVOUS?

CRAA
CRAA
CRAA
ALL RIGHT !!

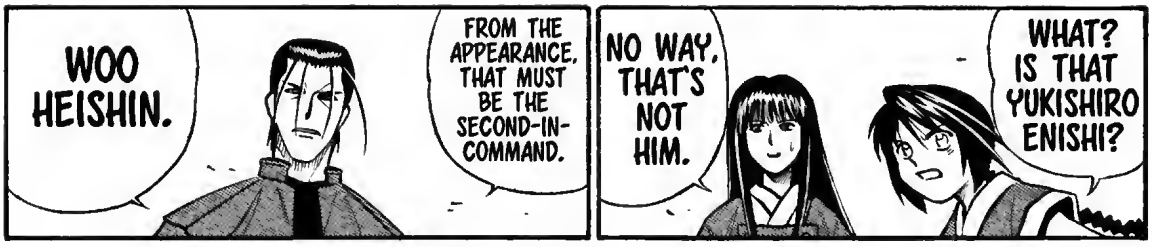


YOU'RE STILL SO YOUNG.
JUST WHEN WE THOUGHT YOU HAD MATURED A LITTLE.
BWA HA!

I KNEW IT...
HMPH.
FWICK
THEY'RE NOT THE TYPE TO HAVE NAIVE THOUGHTS ...
...OF NOT INVOLVING OTHERS.


?!!

JMP


WOO HEISHIN.
FROM THE APPEARANCE, THAT MUST BE THE SECOND-IN-COMMAND.
NO WAY, THAT'S NOT HIM.
WHAT? IS THAT YUKISHIRO ENISHI?

...BUT I WILL RELEASE YOU FROM YOUR BODYGUARD DUTIES FOR A SHORT WHILE...
SŪ-SHIN, MY "FOUR STARS," YOU MUST HAVE HAD TO HOLD YOURSELVES BACK...
HE-EE-EE

To Be Continued in Vol. 27: The Answer

GLOSSARY of the RESTORATION

A brief guide to select Japanese terms used in ***Rurouni Kenshin****. Note that, both here and within the story itself, all names are Japanese style—i.e., last or "family" name first, with personal or "given" name following. This is both because* ***Kenshin*** *is a "period" story, as well as to decrease confusion—if we were to take the example of Kenshin's* sakabatô *and "reverse" the format of the historically established assassin-name "Hitokiri Battôsai," for example, it would make little sense to then call him "Battôsai Himura."*

Fudô Myô-ô
In Vajrayana Buddhism, the destroyer of delusion and protector of Buddhism. Also known in Sanskrit as "the Immovable One," his immovability refers to his ability to remain "unmoved" by carnal temptations. His fearsome blue visage is typically surrounded by flames, representing the purification of the mind.

Himura Kenshin
Kenshin's "real" name, revealed to Kaoru only at her urging

Hiten Mitsurugi-ryû
Kenshin's sword technique, used more for defense than offense. An "ancient style that pits one against many," it requires exceptional speed and agility to master.

hitokiri
An assassin. Famous swordsmen of the period were sometimes thus known to adopt "professional" names—***Kawakami Gensai***, for example, was also known as "Hitokiri Gensai."

Ishin Shishi
Loyalist or pro-Imperialist ***patriots*** who fought to restore the Emperor to his ancient seat of power

Kansatsu Tobikunai
"Piercing/Killing Flying Daggers." Misao's special technique.

aku
Kanji character for "evil," worn by Sanosuke as a remembrance of his beloved, betrayed Captain Sagara and the ***Sekihô Army***

Bakumatsu
Final, chaotic days of the Tokugawa regime

-chan
Honorific. Can be used either as a diminutive (e.g., with a small child—"Little Hanako or Kentarô"), or with those who are grown, to indicate affection ("My dear...").

-dono
Honorific. Even more respectful than ***-san***; the effect in modern-day Japanese conversation would be along the lines of "Milord So-and-So." As used by Kenshin, it indicates both respect and humility.

Edo
Capital city of the ***Tokugawa Bakufu***; renamed ***Tokyo*** ("Eastern Capital") after the Meiji Restoration

-sama
Honorific. The respectful equivalent of ***-san***, ***-sama*** is used primarily in addressing persons of much higher rank than one's self...or, in a romantic sense, in addressing those upon whom one is crushing, wicked hard.

-san
Honorific. Carries the meaning of "Mr.," "Ms.," "Miss," etc., but used more extensively in Japanese than its English equivalent (note that even an enemy may be addressed as "***-san***").

Sekihô Army
Military unit (formed mainly of civilians) who, believing in the cause of the Emperor's restoration to power, were eventually turned upon by those same pro-Imperialist forces and declared traitors

shôgun
Feudal military ruler of Japan

shôgunate
See ***Tokugawa Bakufu***

Tokugawa Bakufu
Military feudal government which dominated Japan from 1603 to 1867

Tokyo
The renaming of "***Edo***" to "***Tokyo***" is a marker of the start of the ***Meiji Restoration***

zanbatô
Sanosuke's huge, oversized sword which gave him the nickname of "Zanza" during his fight merchant days. It was allegedly developed for the purpose of cutting an opponent in half along with his horse.

Kawakami Gensai
Real-life, historical inspiration for the character of ***Himura Kenshin***

-kun
Honorific. Used in the modern day among male students, or those who grew up together, but another usage—the one you're more likely to find in *Rurouni Kenshin*—is the "superior-to-inferior" form, intended as a way to emphasize a difference in status or rank, as well as to indicate familiarity or affection.

Kyoto
Home of the Emperor and imperial court from A.D. 794 until shortly after the ***Meiji Restoration*** in 1868

loyalists
Those who supported the return of the Emperor to power; ***Ishin Shishi***

Meiji Restoration
1853-1868; culminated in the collapse of the ***Tokugawa Bakufu*** and the restoration of imperial rule. So called after Emperor Meiji, whose chosen name was written with the characters for "culture and enlightenment."

patriots
Another term for ***Ishin Shishi***... and, when used by Sano, not a flattering one

rurouni
Wanderer, vagabond

sakabatô
Reversed-edge sword (the dull edge on the side the sharp should be, and vice versa); carried by Kenshin as a symbol of his resolution never to kill again